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# BASEBALL DIGEST

SEPTEMBER  
1946 — 15c



HANK WYSE  
Chicago Cubs

64 Pages—and Every Word Baseball!



## Set For The Catch—

Enos Slaughter's ham hands are ready to glove National League's runs-batted-in crown, as well as fly balls in Cardinals' outfield. Three years in Army Air Forces didn't dull his diamond eyes, either at the plate or afield. Hit .308 in five pre-war seasons.



**COVER PHOTO**  
It's Henry Wyse, the moon-faced right-hander who has been the Cubs' most consistent winner this year. He's hoping to reach the twenty victory mark again. Last year he won twenty-two. ★ ★ ★ Second cover photo of Enos Slaughter by Press Association.



## BASEBALL DIGEST

Vol. 5, No. 7, Sept., 1948

Edited by Herbert Simons

Copyright, 1946, by Baseball Digest, 188 West Randolph Street, Chicago 1, Ill. Registered U. S. Patent Office. Issued monthly except January, June and December. Entered as second-class matter September 19, 1942, at the Post Office at Chicago, Ill., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Re-entered December 17, 1943. Additional entry at the Post Office at Mount Morris, Ill.

[PRINTED  
IN U.S.A.]

Subscription (12 issues) \$1.50 in U.S. and territories. \$2.00 elsewhere. Back numbers (see page 63 for available issues) 20 cents each. In sending change of address, include old address. While every care and consideration will be given unsolicited manuscripts, we cannot be responsible for them.



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# Di-Jests

**A** YOUNGSTER sought out Scout Paul Krichell in the Yankees' training camp last spring and asked if he could practice with the squad. "I'm sorry, sonny," Krich told him, "but Joe McCarthy has given strict instructions that only players under contract are to be permitted to train." "That's all right," the boy countered. "Give me a contract. I'll sign it."—*Hy Goldberg in the Newark News.*



Pitcher Hook Iott of the San Antonio Missions, feeling good, stood on the foul line and flipped a ball neatly into the ball bag on the players' bench. "How's that for control?" he asked. "Fine," said Catcher Sam Harshany, "but that ball bag's the only thing in the park you haven't had three and two on."—*Harold Scherwitz in the San Antonio Light.*



The Cardinals are a running ball team. They run in from the field at the end of an inning, ground out and run back to the dugout as if the sheriff was after them. And once on the bases they get that extra base. The other National League clubs are at a loss how to stop them. Perhaps Casey Stengel's recipe was the best when the flying Red Birds ran Stengel's Boston Braves ragged.

Casey was discussing the problem with Manager Frankie Frisch of the Pirates and not getting to first base toward its solution. But Stengel is never wholly stumped. He gave one of his slow, dry chuckles.

"I'll tell you what I always do when Marion, Kurowski and Sanders get on," he said seriously. "I throw to the next base and if I can get one of 'em to slide I consider it a moral victory."—*Harold Burr in the Brooklyn Eagle.*

"A Nashua, N.H., poultryman gives 100 chicks to each member of the Nashua club of the New England League who hits a home run. Regardless of what the gentlemen of the rules committee might say, this is conclusive proof that a home run can be a 'fowl' ball."—*L. H. Addington, director of publicity for the minor leagues.*

Each Sunday the Pirates have played at home for the last two years, a persistent telephone caller asking for information on the progress of the game has phoned the newspaper office.

The calls came at regular intervals. It was always the same woman's voice.

"Is the first game over?" . . . "Who's ahead?" . . . "What inning is it now?" Always the questions were the same.

The man at the other end of the phone began to think he had found the most rabid lady fan of them all, but he couldn't help wondering why such evident interest wouldn't prompt her to attend the games instead of getting the information second hand.

Recently, his curiosity overcame him. He asked a leading question or two.

"Mercy, no," the voice replied, "I'm not at all interested in baseball, but my husband is. I'm only calling to find out when the game is over so I'll know when to put on the meat."—*Chester L. Smith in the Pittsburgh Press.*



A shirt salesman was telling Ted Lyons, the White Sox manager: "What you fellows need is some long ball hitters. Why don't you go out and get them?"

"How about selling me some white shirts?" Ted replied.

"I can't get 'em," the shirt expert replied. "That's the way it is with long ball hitters," answered Ted.—*Ralph Cannon in the Chicago Herald-American.*

# How would you pitch to —



BY JIMMY POWERS *in the New York News*

**T**HE BEST HITTER in baseball is Ted Williams. Right? Now, if you were a pitcher, how would you pitch to him?

Recently, we have been visiting dug-outs, hither and yon, and we came up with varying answers. There is really no sure-fire way to keep the Big Stick quiet. But mainly—and this is a free tip to those NL pitchers who will face Triphammer Ted in the World Series—the strategy is to pitch low and slow.

Skeeter Dickey, Bill's kid brother, a catcher with the White Sox, put it best when he said, "Low, slow and hope—hope for a single, or double, instead of a homer! I know one thing. The higher you pitch them, the higher and farther they hit the ball." All over the circuit, players speak of Ted with awe. Invariably, when the name is mentioned, someone will point to the fifteenth row of the upper deck in deep right field, and say, "See that broken seat, away up there? Well, Williams did it!" Ted is hitting almost .400 against six teams in the league—and players and managers of all of them admit he has no weakness but a base on balls. The one club which has been able to stop him is the Yankees—and they admit it has been

plain luck. Too, they're fearful of the day he'll break out against them and smear baseballs all over the place. In the first eight games between the teams, Ted batted .080, or two hits in twenty-five tries. Nine times Yankee pitchers preferred to walk him rather than let him hit the ball.

Manager Bill Dickey, who has looked at all great hitters in the league for the past eighteen years, names Williams as best in the business. That is, of those playing now. Bill, of course, thinks there never was a hitter to compare with Lou Gehrig. He won't speak of Ty Cobb, whom he didn't see.

"Williams isn't the best ball player around. Joe DiMaggio is. But, he's the best hitter," says Bill. "We've had to be lucky against him for as long as I can remember. One day, before the war, when Ted was younger and more impressionable, I decided to try a little psychology on him. First time he came to bat, I said, seriously, 'They tell me you can't hit to left field, Ted.' 'That's not so,' he answered. 'I'll show you I can!'

"Well," Bill continued, "he popped up to the shortstop four times in that game as he tried to prove he could hit

to left. Of course, I had the pitcher throwing inside to him, and he wasn't getting any power into the blows!"

Paul Richards, Detroit catcher, is in favor of walking Williams every time he comes to bat. "He's an exception to the established rule that you should never put the winning run on base," Paul explains. "Why, we had the Red Sox beaten in the seventh inning of a game in Detroit earlier this season. Ted came up with two out, the Sox trailing, 4-3, and the tying run on second. Al Benton was pitching. I went to the mound as Williams came to bat and told Benton not to throw anything near the plate. The first three pitches were terrible, and Williams let them go. Benton tried to make the fourth one bad, too, but it slipped just a little. It was inside, but in the strike zone. Well, Ted crashed it down the right field foul line for two bases and tied the score! The Sox went on and won the game!

"If he has any weakness at all," Richards continued, "it's his anxiety to hit the ball. He loves to hit and is afraid he'll be walked. That's why we sometimes get him out by giving him

bad balls on the first couple of pitches. If he lets them go, we just about have to walk him. If he happens to slash at one of those bum ones, and doesn't hit it safely, anyway, then he's done us a favor!"

Lou Boudreau of the Indians is baffled by Ted. "We don't have any success with him at all. He hits everything our pitchers throw. We throw low and slow to make him supply his own power!"

Buddy Rosar, A's catcher, and back-stop Frank Mancuso of the Browns just throw up their hands in horror at the thought of getting the guy out. "Earlier this year we tried keeping it outside and fast, but that didn't work," Mancuso explains. "He must hit over .400 against us. Guess we'll copy that low, slow recipe. At least, he won't hit as far as he does with those fast ones!"

So, Mr. Frick, better tell your boys to try and annoy Ted with those low, tantalizing curves and sliders. Or, maybe a knuckler, if you happen to have a guy who can control the pitch. But, fat fast ones—never! And no "bloopers," either!

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## ***Walking the Pitcher***

"I KNOW of some situations where a club will purposely put a pitcher on base," Carl Hubbell relates. "They figure the next hitter may foul a few and this pitcher may have to run on whatever happens, etc. I know, from my own experience, it makes a difference if you go to the mound panting a bit or short of breath. The other guys know it, too, and they come up against you with more confidence and a hitter's dangerous when he's that way."—*Halsey Hall in the Minneapolis Star.*

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DUTCH RUETHER, the Cub scout, back from a tour of the Pacific Coast, included in his report a line anent Joe Sprinz, a catcher for San Francisco. His comment was "Sprinz. Catcher. Age 42. About through. . . !"—*John P. Carmichael in the Chicago Daily News.*

# What's with Koiby?

BY STANLEY FRANK

*Condensed from Collier's*



**W**ALTER KIRBY HIGBE is crazy. He is crazy to pitch and crazy because he wants to pitch every day in flagrant violation of the union rules which admonish the brothers against abusing the meal ticket—or arm—more than twice a week.

Not since Dizzy Dean began to flout all natural laws governing wear and tear on the human arm a dozen or so years ago has there been a pitcher with Higbe's ardent yen for throwing baseballs. When the fellow isn't demanding to start games, he is relieving faltering colleagues and feeling pretty morose because he didn't start in the first place.

Old guys' tales warning brash youth of the disaster which will overtake silly citizens who lay down their arms and careers for the soulless baseball corporations fall on tin ears when addressed to Higbe. In the last decade, virtually every work horse has lost his effectiveness temporarily—or his job permanently—as a result of punching his meal ticket full of holes prematurely. Those who have been befouled by the sore-arm epizootic include such eminent craftsmen as the Dean boys, Hubbell, Grove, Ruffing, Gomez, Lyons, Mungo, Rowe, Schumacher and Vander Meer. But Higbe

feels he can outlast the sun, the moon, the stars and the earth, and he may be right at that.

"Ain't never had a sore arm and ain't never felt tired in my life," he says negligently. "The only bad thing that's happened to me while pitchin' is that I've had my brains knocked out and I got a catch in my back at Moline nine years ago. That warn't much, though.

"It ain't the arm that goes, anyway. It's the shoulder. Most of these sore-arm fellas are overhand pitchers; they get a lot of shoulder into it. Me, I use a sidearm, three-quarter motion that hardly puts any strain on my shoulder. Another thing: Most fellas weaken their arms with too much rubbin'. I never let a trainer touch my arm before or after I pitch. She always comes back strong."

Pitchers are a funny race. As soon as they gain the esteem of the constituents and a balance in the bank, they suddenly regard their arms as precious properties which must be conserved, but not our man Higbe, the iconoclast.

Leo Durocher, Brooklyn manager who was one of the sweaty slaves on the Cardinals during Dizzy Dean's salad days, says his man Higbe is a pup of Dizzy's for spirit and stamina.

"When the jam is on and you need a pitcher to stop a rally, Higbe is looking up at you instead of looking down at his shoes, like too many pitchers," Durocher reveals. "Dizzy was that way. Always restless on the bench, always going to the bull pen to warm up five minutes before he was asked to get ready."

Like Dizzy, Higbe has sublime confidence in himself. When he joined the Dodgers at training camp in 1941 he blandly announced he would win twenty games. He continued to assure one and all that he was a cinch for twenty, while the team was wandering over the face of the country on its exhibition tour. The season opened, and Higbe immediately lost his first two starts, both to the Giants by scores of 3-1—although he gave no earned runs—and 7-5. The anvil chorus began to give him the business. Higbe went into conference with himself and came out of it, reckoning as how he knew what the trouble was. He always had worn number thirteen on his shirt, he explained gravely, and the Dodgers had broken his luck by making him change to number fifteen. He went back to the hoodoo identification and won ten of his next dozen games.

Any other resemblance between the firebrands is purely coincidental, however. Higbe is not, and probably never will be, the pitcher Dizzy was. He is not quite as smart in a baseball sense or as resourceful; his leaping fast ball does not explode in the batter's startled face as did Dizzy's Sunday pitch when the heat was on and stern measures were needed to cool off the opposition. Higbe is not particularly

big for a pitcher, especially a work-horse pitcher. He is an inch under six feet and weighs 180 pounds.

But in their attitude toward their profession, both are brothers of the same lodge, and for that reason alone, Higbe will continue to be a big winner and a jewel of great price in the diamond trade. Brooklyn had to give up \$100,000 in cash and three players to get him from the Phillies after the close of the 1940 season, and the Dodgers have had no cause whatever to regret the deal. The \$100,000 insured a million-dollar pennant.

Restless craving for action characterizes Higbe on and off the field. During the season he doesn't average more than three hours of sleep a night; he is wound up so tightly inside that he finds it impossible to relax. The energetic pitcher is the most indefatigable gin rummy addict east of Hollywood. More than once he has sat up all night and played the spots off a deck of cards with a groggy house dick.

He will play any game with anyone for money, marbles or fun to satisfy his insatiable appetite for action. One spring, when the Dodgers trained at Havana, Higbe commuted between the ball park and the Casino and once, on an off day, he dug in at a roulette table before noon and didn't leave until the joint closed.

When the team shifted its base to Florida at Safety Harbor, Higbe took complete charge of the lone quarter slot machine in the hotel. He refused to let anybody else play the thing and frequently had his wife hold the fort when he was called away to practice.



Durocher, a fast guy with a buck himself, tried to tell the fellow he couldn't lick the percentages and begged him not to throw his arm out, pulling the lever. Higbe compromised by pouring quarters into the one-armed bandit with his left hand.

After watching the marathon battle between the man and the machine, incredulous onlookers were convinced that Higbe never will suffer a sore arm. The bandit's iron arm developed a piteous squeak, but Higbe's business flipper showed no strain at all. He gorged the machine with quarters during the ten days the team was at Safety Harbor, and conservative estimates placed his losses at no less than one hundred dollars a day. The only game of chance which does not appeal to Kirby Higbe is horse racing.

Higbe's entirely innocent night prowling has given rise to many snide whispers in the dugouts. One summer, after he made a supposedly secret visit to a psychiatrist in Cincinnati, the baseball grapevine was intrigued by a rumor to the effect that the guy really had blown his top. The Brooklyn club did send its eccentric ace to a psychiatrist, but for no other purpose than to have his insomnia cured. It wasn't. Gossipers also will tell you Higbe is as fond of the bottle as he is of getting base hits.

"It's a lie!" Durocher asserts shrilly. "The screwball is up all night, yes, but hard liquor, positively no. Sooner or later, one way or another, managers find out which men drink and how much. We had a couple on our club last season, but Higbe wasn't one of them. He'll have a glass of beer occa-

sionally, but I doubt that Higbe has even one shot of whisky a year."

IT DIDN'T take Higbe long to discover he had no great affection for a normal, quiet life. Born thirty-one years ago in Columbia, South Carolina, still his winter address, Higbe got fed up with book l'arnin' in the seventh grade when he was twelve. He quit school and went to work as an office boy in the local branch of the Southern Railway and held the job for two years, or until baseball entered his life. He gravitated naturally toward pitching, the center of action, and by the time he was sixteen the Higbe boy had quite a reputation.

Representing the home post in the American Legion national amateur tournament of 1931, the Columbia kids were invincible with Higbe pumping his fireball past the enfeebled opposition. They won the regional title at Charlotte, North Carolina, continued unbeaten in the Eastern finals at Manchester, New Hampshire, roared through the elimination round at Houston, Texas, then played South Chicago for the national championship. The game lasted fourteen innings. Higbe gave five hits, fanned eighteen—and lost, 1-0, on an error.

Houston was crawling with major league scouts, and they immediately began to cut one another's throats with great zeal to sign the kid from Carolina. Lawrence Hamilton finally got Higbe for Pittsburgh with a \$1,000 bonus. Those were the last kind words and the last chunk of folding money Walter Kirby was to get for six years.

Pittsburgh shipped the kid to

Wichita in 1932, and Wichita shipped him home when, after six weeks, his wildness threatened to depopulate the Western League by decapitation. Muskogee tried him the next year, but not for long. He lost four of the five games he pitched and averaged a walk an inning. By this time, Pittsburgh had lost interest in the scatter-arm, and Higbe returned to Columbia and the semi-pros of the surrounding countryside. In the next two years in the deepest Carolina bush, Higbe lost one game and won something like thirty-five.

Only two people believed Higbe would amount to a big league pitcher. One was Higbe himself. The other was Chick Galloway, the old American League infielder who was managing a semi-pro team at Laurens, South Carolina. In '34, Galloway persuaded Atlanta to take a flier on the kid late in the season, and our hero promptly lost the two starts he made and resolutely adhered to his routine of one base on balls per inning. It was the considered opinion of several competent critics that Higbe couldn't stand in the middle of Peachtree Street and throw three consecutive balls down that thoroughfare without breaking a window.

Muttering uncomplimentary things having to do with the quality of Mr. Galloway's judgment and eyesight, Atlanta sent Higbe to Portsmouth in '35. He was no ball of fire, but Connie Mack's agents made a half-hearted attempt to buy him. They went away when the price was mentioned. Higbe remained at Portsmouth and in '36 had the best year up to that point in his

career; he won eight games and lost eight and issued a walk only every other inning. The Cubs took him on a look and farmed him out to Moline, of the Three-I League, in '37.

There, for the first time in six seasons of organized baseball, Higbe won more games than he lost. He had, in short, a year for himself. He led the league with twenty-one victories and five defeats, struck out the enormous total of 257 men in 215 innings and clinched the pennant for Moline by licking Clinton, Iowa, in the decisive playoff game. In the confusion, he also led the league in walks and wild pitches, but he was coming along. Promoted to Birmingham in '38, Higbe earned his spot with the Cubs by winning fifteen games for a sixth-place club.

The first time the Dodgers saw Higbe in a Chicago uniform they saw entirely too much of him. That was on May 17, 1939, the date of the screwiest game the Dodgers ever played—and the Dodgers have figured in most of the squirrel-cage contests on record. At the end of nine innings, the athletes were locked in a nine-all tie. Ten innings and a lifetime later the score still was 9-9. The Dodgers battered old Earl Whitehill for fifteen hits in the first twelve rounds, but Higbe thereafter stopped them colder than the thermometer, which was in the low thirties. He gave the Dodgers one hit in seven innings.

Displaying the sagacity for which they are celebrated, the Cubs twelve days later traded Higbe to Philadelphia. In 1940, it became obvious that Higbe was not destined to waste

his sweetness on the desert air of Philadelphia for long. He won fourteen games for the humpty-dumpties and led the league in strikeouts—and bases on balls! The Dodgers, remembering the rookie who had kept them on a hook in the Chicago icebox, investigated further when Higbe defeated the hated Giants five times with two-, three-, four-, five- and seven-hit performances.

Larry MacPhail, determined to buy the pennant for Brooklyn, went into consultation with Durocher after the season and asked his manager to name the men he needed to win in 1941.

"Higbe, Mickey Owen, Billy Herman and an outfielder who can hit .780," Durocher snapped. MacPhail bought in order all the players but the outfielder, and you will please note that Higbe's name led all the rest. That's how it turned out at the end of the year when he won twenty-two games and lost nine.

That he lost more than two or three games was strictly his own fault—the old fault, lack of control. Nobody knows when these fits of wildness are due. He can go along pitching an elegant game—in sixteen of his victories that year he gave the opposition two runs or less—and then it hap-

pens out of nowhere. His control goes off the beam; first it gets bad, then it gets worse, and finally the customers sitting in the upper tier behind the plate are fleeing for the bomb shelters. His trouble is not emotional; for a citizen of his volatile temperament, Higbe is a surprisingly calm, dead fish on the mound. He simply cannot throw the ball up an alley when he is seized by a spasm.

"There's only one thing to do when he gets like that," Durocher admits. "You gotta get him out or they'll knock him out. If he ever learns control, he'll be the Feller of the National League."

Higbe doesn't want to be difficult about this, but he doubts he ever will see that happy day.

"You cain't change an ole hound dawg," he says casually. "Besides, I might get belted if I had better control. Them bums at the plate would take toe holds on my stuff if they knew the ball was comin' over. Shucks, I got to leave my mark on this game somehow. Looks like the only way I can do it is with bases on balls. Give me ten years in this league and I'll bust every record in the book."

And, incidentally, win a hatful of ball games too!

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## Strawberry Pitch

ERNIE BONHAM has a new name for his old "V for Victory" pitch. The New York Yankees' hurler now calls it his "strawberry ball." Why? "I throw it," says Ernie, "the batter soon slides into third base and, presto, he gets a 'strawberry' on his hip. See?"

# Why It's "A Texas Leaguer"

BY HAROLD V. RATLIFF

*Associated Press*

**T**HE TEXAS LEAGUE has sent many players to the majors to win everlasting fame, but no contribution ever attracted more attention than the term "Texas Leaguer." It was many years ago that they began calling a "Texas Leaguer" any ball hit just over second base, and there are several versions why such a hit got this name.

The earliest was that back before 1900—the Texas League was organized in 1888—John J. McCloskey, who founded the circuit, had gone to Louisville to manage its entry in the old National League. He took a flock of players along with him. They were continually dropping hits over the infield—far enough to be out of reach of the infielders yet too short for the outfielders to catch.

Soon the fans would remark when one of those fellows came to bat:

"Well, we'll have another Texas Leaguer."

But the latest version is from L. J. Lawrence, of Tyler, Tex., who played bush league ball back in Hill County when Tris Speaker was making his baseball start. Texarkana was in the Texas League in the early part of the century, relates Lawrence. Texarkana is a city divided by a state line—part of it is in Texas, part in Arkansas.

Well, it seems the diamond was the same way. Home plate, first base and third base were in Arkansas; second base and the outfield were in Texas. When a player hit one over second they called it a Texas Leaguer. Records show Texarkana was in the Texas League in 1902 for a period of a little more than two months and the term could have originated in that brief span.

However, Texarkana got more fame out of a game played at Ennis June 15, 1902, than out of the appellation "Texas Leaguer." That was the day Corsicana beat Texarkana 51-3. There probably never has been another game in organized baseball with such a score. It was supposed to be played in Corsicana but because there was a law against Sunday baseball in that city, it was shifted to neutral Ennis. Nig Clarke, Corsicana catcher, slugged eight home runs in eight times at bat. His team got fifty-three hits altogether, twenty-one of them homers. Texarkana gathered in nine hits, all singles except three and those were doubles.

Whether there were any "Texas Leaguers" hit in that memorable game is not revealed. Chances are a fellow doing no better than that would have been so ashamed he'd have gone off down the creek somewhere to hide.



# Tebbetts Casts a Vote—

## Newhouser Over Feller!

BY SHIRLEY POVICH

*Condensed from the Washington Post*

**“THIS MAY** get me struck out the next time we play Cleveland,” said Mr. Birdie Tebbetts of the Tigers, “but our Hal Newhouser is a better pitcher than Bob Feller.”

Tebbetts, who is Newhouser's batterymate, waxes emphatic when Feller versus Newhouser is the topic. He makes only one concession to the Cleveland fast ball star. “Feller can throw the ball harder than Hal, everybody has to admit that,” he says, “but Newhouser has more good pitches and better control.

“Hal has an overhand curve that nobody has got a hit off yet this season,” says Tebbetts. “It's the best pitch I've ever seen and you don't hear much about it. He threw three of 'em to Joe DiMaggio and Joe couldn't even foul 'em. He'd never seen the pitch before.”

Newhouser has surprised even Tebbetts with some of the pitches he cuts loose. There was the day in Cleveland when Newhouser was in a tight spot with three on and two strikes on Al Helf, the Cleveland pitcher. He fanned Helf with a fast ball that almost got away from Tebbetts.

“I walked out to the mound,” said Tebbetts, “and asked Hal how come he could come up with a fast ball like

that in the ninth inning. It was the fastest thing he had thrown all day. All he said was, ‘well, I hold one back every once in a while.’ He's always got that extra something.

“That's the nice thing about catching Hal. He can always put something extra on his pitch when he's in trouble. He could have been knocked out of the box a half dozen times this season if the opposition could have gotten just one more hit off him, but they never did get it. When he's bearing down, he's beautiful.”

Tebbetts admits that Newhouser is not the sweetest character among the league's pitchers and he says, too, “I guess you could call him pretty mean out there, but that's all right. I like to catch mean guys who don't like to lose. The woods are full of wonderful fellows who can't win ball games, and when you're out there pitching, the most important thing you can do is win.

“Maybe you have to be a little bit mean to be a great pitcher. Walter Johnson was an exception, of course, and I guess you'd have to call Bob Feller on the sweet-tempered side, but look at some of the other great pitchers. Lefty Grove was a tough guy to get along with. Wes Ferrell kicked up an awful fuss when he was pitching,

and Johnny Allen could blow his top. Buck Newsom is a great pitcher, but you wouldn't call him a guy with an even disposition."

The fact is, said Tebbetts, Newhouser's disposition is improving as he keeps winning. He was a tougher guy to handle before he had a winning year back in 1944, in the seasons when he lost the close ones he lately has been winning.

"You've got to hand it to Newhouser because he wins the tough games," said Tebbetts. "Look at what he's done this year. He's been in three 1-0 games and three 2-1 games and won 'em all. The only clubs that have licked him have been the Red Sox twice and the Yankees once, and in the case of the Yankees he was a relief

pitcher. Nobody is going to come close to him in earned-run averages at the end of the season.

"And don't forget, Newhouser is pitching for the worst defensive club in the league. That's us, the Tigers. And we don't hit so much, either. When you win a ball game for our club, you're quite a pitcher, and Newhouser could win thirty for us this year. How can you take anything away from a guy like that?"

He pointed out, too, that in any comparison of Newhouser vs. Feller you've got to take into account that Newhouser faces more right-handed hitters than Feller does left-handers. And also that Ted Williams gets fewer hits off Newhouser than against any other pitcher in the league.

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## Dollar Day

FRANKIE FRISCH and Umpire George Magerkurth really climbed into high finance before they were through with an argument in Philadelphia recently.

The play was this: Frankie Gustine attempted to score from second on a single to right but was caught at the plate. Frisch contended that Catcher Gus Mancuso had blocked the plate while the ball was still in flight. Until he has possession of the ball, the rules say, the catcher is not permitted to block off the runner. Magerkurth argued he did have possession. From that point, the conversation ran like this:

Frisch: I'll betcha five thousand dollars you're wrong.

Magerkurth: I'll betcha ten thousand I'm right.

Frisch: Fifteen thousand you're wrong.

Magerkurth: Twenty thousand I'm right.

Frisch: Twenty-five thousand I'm right.

It continued in that vein until Uncle Frank had gone up to 50,000 dollars, at which point Al Lopez, who had been an awed listener, stepped in.

"Could either of you guys give a fellow a dime for a cup of coffee?" the Senor inquired.

"Play ball," Magerkurth screamed, and the game went on.—*Chester L. Smith in the Pittsburgh Press.*

# Lunch with Bucky Harris

BY JOHN P. CARMICHAEL

*Condensed from the Chicago Daily News*

**O**VER SOME ham and cabbage, plus a side order of baked beans, Stanley "Bucky" Harris was talking about handling a ball team.

"There's no such a thing as a real bad manager," he said. "They all have one thing in common: They want to win. They all don't have one thing in common: They haven't got the same material with which to win.

"Every manager has his own way of doing things and it's an outgrowth of the way he's brought up. I learned my baseball from Clark Griffith. You'd say that Frankie Frisch (Pirate boss) is a John McGraw man.

"I'd bet that Bill Dickey (Yankee pilot) is a Miller Huggins type more than a Joe McCarthy guy, i.e., Bill's impressions must be those of Huggins.

"We all do things differently. I'm sitting up in the stands now and the other day I watched Gabby Hartnett bring his infield in with the bags full and Jersey City's best hitter at bat.

"I shuddered. Me? I'd have played 'em back and tried for the double play.

"But the batter hit to short and the man on third was out at the plate. Hartnett was right. It worked."

Harris was the "boy manager" who won Washington's first pennant in 1924. He repeated in '25. At the end of the 1928 season he was called into Clark Griffith's office. "Stanley," said

Griff, "I've decided to make a change."

Then, as Bucky tells it: "Tears began to roll down his cheeks. He was crying, out in the open. I said: 'That's all right, Mr. Griffith,' and walked out . . . just to save him any further embarrassment.

"I liked the old guy. I always have. He did what he felt he had to do and nothing would have changed his mind. But he was like a father to me and that's the sort of an affection you never lose."

Today Harris is general manager of the Buffalo team in the International League with Hartnett, the former Cub, as field boss. Whether Bucky ever comes back to the majors or not, he is generally hailed as one of the best managers ever to run a big league club.

He was a second-baseman in his day and he'll always believe that infielders and catchers make the best managers.

"How many pitchers, including the one and only Walter Johnson, ever made successful managers?" Harris asked. "Or Christy Mathewson. A pitcher is an individualist; he's not bound up in every complexity of a game like an infielder or catcher.

"Even an outfielder, to a less extent than a pitcher maybe, is alone way out there. He isn't involved in the goings-on around the diamond proper."

Harris was fifty years old recently, but he neither looks nor feels it. He

thinks the pattern of baseball is as different from twenty years ago as night is from day.

"It's like a brand new game these times," said Bucky. "Your type of player is different and he has to be handled differently than the old-timers.

"Whereas a ball player wasn't allowed in big hotels years ago, he is now a definite social asset. Moreover he's conscious of how he stands as a sport figure and resents any 'man-handling' you might say."

When Bucky does probe the past a bit, he invariably winds up talking about Johnson. When he recalls Johnson, he remembers the saddest day of their lives for both; the day in Pittsburgh, in '25, when Kiki Cuyler sin-

gled over first to whip the "Big Train" and cost the Senators a second straight series triumph.

"Walter had Cuyler struck out on the previous pitch . . . a perfect strike that Umpire Quigley called a ball," said Harris. "Johnson thought so too . . . and that's the only pitch I ever heard him complain about . . . before or later in his career.

"On top of that I get a wire from Ban Johnson (then American League prexy) next day at home, criticizing me for allowing Walter to stay in there . . . calling it bad taste and an affront to a great man.

"All I know is that if you couldn't win with Walter . . . ! He was the best."

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## **Hitting Three—and—Nothing**

THEY SAY THAT nothing succeeds like success and it has certainly proved so with the pennant bound Red Sox. Everything the club has done, it seems, has turned out right. A veteran American League observer claims that in no other season has a ball team cut at as many three and nothing pitches as the Bosox have this year—and that, of course, is against all rules of percentage. But it has worked.

Ted Williams naturally has been one of the batters to violate the old idea and he has won several games by swinging with a three-and-nothing count. Rudy York is another who has done so. Recently Rudy beat his former Detroit mates with a home run on a three-and-nothing pitch.

This reporter has asked several American Association managers for their views on letting batters hit the three-and-nothing pitch. All agree it is hardly sound baseball. They argue that there are too few top notch hitters in the league to permit it as general strategy.

"It takes a sound hitter like Ted Williams to hit with three balls and no strikes called," said Milwaukee's Nick Cullop. "Williams probably qualifies but how many Ted Williamses are there? All the years I played I always hit above .300, but only once was I allowed to hit with the count three-and-oh. And that pitch was a home run ball and won the pennant for us. But I certainly don't believe in letting batters hit that three-nothing 'fat' one as a practice."—*Sam Levy in the Milwaukee Journal.*



# Reiser Needs a "Secretary"

BY HAROLD C. BURR

*Condensed from the Brooklyn Eagle*

**T**HE SOLUTION to the weak arm of Pete Reiser might be for the Brooklyn outfielder to employ a throwing secretary. It's been done before in the big leagues. Goose Goslin couldn't get twenty feet into his pegs one year when he was with the Washington Senators. But Manager Bucky Harris wanted to keep him in the ball game, just as Manager Leo Durocher is anxious to have the Pistol coming up regularly with his explosive bat. The Goose was a terrific hitter, too.

On that Washington team was a shortstop by the name of Bobby Reeves. Bobby has long since passed out of the baseball limelight. But he had his hour, a vicarious sort of hero. The idea was hit upon that on every fly or ground ball hit to Goslin, Reeves was to rush out, take a short toss from the Goose and relay the leather to its proper base.

It was tried out with fair success until the Senators' big slugger got the use of his own arm back. Reeves, his big job done, didn't stay with the American Leaguers very long thereafter, but he got a lot of publicity out of the experiment.

SOMETIMES when the best specialists in the land can't bring a dead arm back to life the simplest of remedies does the trick. Long before Whitlow Wyatt became a Dodger the Detroit

club sent him down to their Beaumont farm team in the Texas League to die. Whit's arm was gone. But the big fellow didn't give up. He would take off his uniform shirt and go out and lie in the outfield by the hour to let the hot Texas sun soak into the sore muscles.

The arm came back and it wasn't until years afterward that Wyatt had to hang up. Meanwhile, he became one of the great right-handers of the game.

EARLE COMBS was the regular center fielder of the Yankees in some of their greatest campaigns. He was a savage hitter who softened up many an enemy pitcher for the kill by Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig. He could run like a frightened gazelle and was a sure fielder. But Combs always had a weak throwing arm.

He tried to strengthen the muscles of his forearm by carrying a rubber ball with him every place he went. It was one of the sights of the Bronx to see the tall, gray-haired man bouncing the little toy ball as he strolled the streets. Cookie Lavagetto took much the same treatment for his arm this last Western trip of the Dodgers. But the third baseman contented himself with squeezing the rubber ball and tossing it against the wall of his room.

Dizzy Dean's million-dollar pitching arm went lifeless in his last days with the Cardinals from overwork. He be-

came frantic when everything failed to bring it back to its old blazing resiliency. Then he happened to remember what his mother had done when he was a small boy. Old-fashioned goose-grease was the cure for all the Dean childish ills.

So the Great Diz went back to first principles and bought a bottle of goose grease and applied it to his soupbone. It brought the arm back sufficiently for Branch Rickey to sell him to the Cubs for \$185,000.

Ed Linke developed a set of numb fingers on his pitching hand while hurling for the Senators. He had to

have a heating pad as his constant companion to warm 'em up before he could throw a ball. He took a miniature pad out to the box with him and took constant recourse to it in the early innings. But Detroit wouldn't let him get away with it. The Tigers looked it up and found that the artificial aid was a violation of the rules and poor Linke, perforce, had to abandon the pad.

There's talk of having Reiser's arm wired for throwing after the close of the regular season. But in the meanwhile Pete may think of some simple remedy himself to overcome his handicap. Ball players are ingenious guys.

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## Scouting Convention

IF THERE hadn't been a Democratic convention in Houston one hot summer in the twenties, there might not have been a Carl Hubbell, or at least a Hubbell as you and the Giants came to know him. "The Tigers had shipped me to Beaumont and just about given up on me, I guess," grinned Hub the other day. "The Beaumont club wasn't going any place, but we moved into Houston for a series and Houston was hot.

"Now it happened that Dick Kinsella, sometimes a Giant scout, also was a delegate to the convention at that time. He hadn't intended going to the game at all, for he was a politician then, but things got dull and he came out. They put me in to pitch. The other pitcher was Wild Bill Hallahan of Houston and did we have a game! I finally beat old Bill, 2-1, in ten innings and—well, Kinsella went back into the scouting business and grabbed me for the Giants."—*Halsey Hall in the Minneapolis Star.*

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## An Affront?

WHEN CLARK GRIFFITH met Bernardo Pasquel of the Mexican League in Havana, Pasquel in a spirit of friendship put his arm around Griffith's shoulder and said he would not persuade any of the Washington players to jump to Mexico. "What's the matter?" said Griffith, "aren't they good enough for you?"—*Shirley Povich in the Washington Post.*

# Six Homers in Six Days— But Not One Counted!

BY DON HILL

*Condensed from a broadcast over Station WAVE, Louisville, Ky.*

**T**HIS IS the tale of a ball player who hit six "home runs," one in each of six consecutive ball games, and yet did not receive credit for hitting *any* of the six! It happened in the Three-I League at Bloomington in 1923. Bill Bribeck, slugging first baseman, was the unfortunate hitter, and each of his six homers was nullified for an entirely different reason.

Bribeck's hits would have been legitimate home runs had they been hit on any other days of that or any other season. Here's how: The outfield fence at Bloomington had been, ever since the park was built, a low three-foot wire structure. The left field fence in particular was relatively close to the plate and presented an easy target for pull-hitting, right-handed batters such as Bribeck. Bill had hit many flies that dropped over this fence for round-trippers. But so had many opposing hitters—too many in fact. More opposing batters were able to take advantage of it than Bloomington hitters and the management decided to remedy the situation by erecting a ten-foot board fence about five feet back of the low wire barrier.

So right after the team left home for a long road trip, carpenters were put to work erecting the new higher board

fence. The job was being completed as the club returned home. It was just a few minutes before game-time that workers finished removing the last fence posts of the old low wall, and Bribeck noted with a disappointed look that his drives were going to have to go a little farther to be homers.

The first of Bribeck's six homers that didn't count was hit his second time at bat, that first day of the new fence. He pulled a high fly down the line which unquestionably cleared the spot where the old fence had been. It struck the new fence close to the top and bounded back into the field. Bill was held to a double on a hit that in any other game of that or any previous season would have been a home run.

That alone would not have been very extraordinary. It's the bad luck that followed which makes Bribeck's story so amazing. Next day Bill was determined not to let that new wall get the best of him and in the very first inning he lifted the ball high and far over the new board wall for a very legitimate home run. As he returned to the bench smiling, after his jog around the sacks, Bill remarked that that was one home run nothing—high fence or any other factor—could take away from him.

It wasn't fifteen minutes until he had

to eat his words. Before the third inning was finished a heavy rainstorm broke loose. It continued all afternoon. The game was postponed and of course the individual performances were tossed out of the record books. As it developed, that was the only game all season Bloomington started that failed to go five innings. And for the second time in as many days, what would have been a home run any other day, was nullified for Bribeck.

FAIR SKIES greeted Bribeck on the third day of the series and he knew the weatherman couldn't deprive him of another homer. It wasn't until the seventh inning that Bill connected, but when he did he sent the sphere sailing long and far over that despised left fence. As he loped around the bases this time Bill was reminding himself that since it was the seventh inning this circuit blow was certain to count regardless of rainstorm, jinx or old lady bad luck. As he neared third base his coach shouted a congratulatory remark at Bill and he looked up and smiled his thanks as he rounded the bag. What he didn't realize was that in his eagerness and enthusiasm he had failed to touch third base. The opposing third baseman, much to Bribeck's misfortune, had an eagle eye and a discreet tongue. He waited until a new ball had been officially put in play and then shouted to his pitcher to toss him the ball. He promptly stepped on third base and the base umpire stuck his fist toward the sky—and Bill's third home run in as many days was erased!

Bribeck could no longer restrain his feelings. He paced the dugout waiting

for his first trip at bat on the fourth day. When he came up there was a runner on first base and Bill arched a towering fly toward the left field corner. For a few seconds there was some question whether the ball would clear the wall and the base runner held up half way to second waiting to see whether the high fly would go over or be caught close to the fence. Bill wasn't sure about it, either, and was running at top speed to get as far as possible in the event the ball hit the fence. Remembering his tragedy of the day before, he ran with his head down, watching his feet to make sure he didn't miss a base. His overworked emotions made him forget about the base runner ahead of him. As he rounded first with his head down the ball dropped back of the fence for a home run.

But was it? The base runner, who had been waiting, started to jog as he saw the ball go over, but Bribeck's momentum was too great. Before the runner ahead could pick up speed or shout at Bill the disgruntled slugger had breezed past him and went around second ahead of him. Only the sharp cry of the umpire bellowing "You're out," brought Bribeck out of his stupor. A fourth homer cancelled!

BY GAME TIME next day Bill's emotions had run the gamut from anger to despair. There is little doubt that he wasn't fully in control of his actions. He was the number three hitter in the batting order and on the fifth day of this hectic sequence the fellow who usually hit in the "two hole," just before Bribeck, did not start the game because of an injured ankle. However,



midway in the game the injured player was sent up to pinch hit for the pitcher, and after Bloomington had been retired the manager elected to keep this pinch hitter in the ball game. He removed the sub who had started the game and sent the pinch hitter out to play. A new pitcher was required, but since the pinch hitter was staying in, he kept the retiring pitcher's position in the batting order—ninth; and the new hurler had to take the batting order position left by the sub—second.

A few innings later this regular, who had for many days previous hit second, just ahead of Bribeck, came up again in his new spot in this game, ninth. Bill forgot that this man, whom he usually followed, was batting ninth that day, not second, and as soon as the player had batted Bill dashed up to the plate. The manager and number one hitter, who was due to bat, must be given part of the blame for Bribeck's jinx continuing to hex him. For it wasn't till Bill had taken a lusty cut at the first pitch that they realized he was batting out of turn.

By then it was too late. Bribeck had met the pitch and tagged it well. Far out over the left field fence it sailed for a home run. At least that's what Bribeck thought. Then came the opposing team's challenge that Bill had batted out of turn. Home run number five in five days—in the ash can!

ON THE SIXTH DAY Bribeck was despondent to the point of being sullen. He spoke to no one. The other players didn't bother speaking to him for fear of reminding him of the hor-

rible thing that was happening to him. In this game Bill hit no home run for nine innings, but Bloomington tied the score in the ninth and sent the contest into extra frames. For another five innings neither club scored and at the end of the fourteenth the umpires decided there was just enough daylight left to play one more inning. Their deduction would probably have been right if it hadn't been for what happened. The opposing team went on a batting rampage that totaled seven runs in the first of the fifteenth.

Bloomington's first two batters singled, bringing up Bribeck, the disconsolate. In the rapidly descending darkness Bill did it again. He smashed a drive over the wall for the sixth game in succession and three runs came home.

But at that point it was almost pitch dark and the Bloomington players realized they didn't have time to score another four runs. Their only hope of averting defeat was to stall until it was impossible to continue—before three men went out. The next two batters took their time getting up to the plate and by then the umpires had no choice except to call the game. The score reverted back to the end of the previous inning since Bloomington had not had a full time at bat. And the individual records of that fifteenth inning became null and void, including Bribeck's four bagger.

And that's the amazing story of Bill Bribeck, the player who hit six balls that would have been home runs on any other six days . . . and none of them counted!

# Heard in the Pressbox

**F**OR DAYS Catcher Mike Dooley of the Greenville club in the East Texas loop had been walking in the clouds dreaming of his approaching marriage. His teammates gave him the "needles" by the hour, but Mike just laughed them off.

Then in one game Mike connected for a long clout, but, ambled along—possibly still thinking of the forthcoming nuptials—and was thrown out at third. He tried to avoid Manager Alex Hooks as he slipped back into the dugout, but Alex was waiting.

"What," Alex roared, "were you doing—carrying a piano around with you for the wedding march?"



YOU'VE HEARD of batters changing their stance, the weight of their bludgeon and even moving from one side of the plate to the other in frantic attempts to shake slumps. But did you know that Joe Cronin once clipped his eyebrows as he struggled to gain recognition in the batter's box?

"That's right," remarked the manager of the Boston Red Sox, nodding his head. "I was with the Pittsburgh club.

"Donie Bush said to me one time that he thought I was the worst looking hitter he ever saw and I guess he was right," continued the Californian who later was to develop into one of the leading sluggers of the modern game. "I was pretty bad back there when I belonged to the Pirates.

"But I was determined to improve myself," Joe went on. "I wasn't playing regularly and realized that I never would unless I learned to hit. So whether we were at home or on the road, I'd go out to the park early each day and get somebody to pitch to me. I even suspended a piece of cork from the ceiling on a string and practiced cutting at it.

"Finally, one hot day I was working out with Socko, the Pittsburgh clubhouse boy, and I noticed that sweat was running down my forehead and into my eyes, making them smart," Cronin said. "It gave me an idea. I went into the clubhouse, got a pair of scissors from the trainer and clipped my eyebrows. Did it help me? Well, I don't honestly know. But I thought it did and that's half the battle."—*Ed Rumill in The Christian Science Monitor.*



SAID A REPORTER to Mrs. Frank Frisch: "Your husband has amazed us this year. I know how he loves to win, but he's easier to get along with managing a losing team than when he was winning." Said Mrs. Frisch to a reporter: "I know, but I'd rather have him as a winning manager because when he's grouching, I know he's happy, and when he's happy his team is in the race."—*Les Biederman in the Pittsburgh Press.*

# The Velvety Verban

BY DONALD H. DREES

**E**ARLY this season Emil Verban was as unhappy as a rose-fever sufferer in a garden of American Beauties. This despite the fact he was a member of the star-lush St. Louis Cardinals who have made a habit of first-division finishes and of World Series melon-cutting for the last twenty years. A few weeks later he became happy with the Philadelphia Phillies, a team that has won only one championship—way back in 1917, while since maintaining squatters rights in the National League cellar.

Strange, wasn't it? Even stranger, too, when you recall that the Red Birds began the 1946 race as the odds-on choice to win the title while the Phils were the "of course" choice of the experts to finish last again.

But Verban's mental misery was not so strange if you knew Verban and if you knew the situation.

Verban had been an outstanding cog as the Cardinals won the 1944 N.L. flag and he had soared to Tommy Thevenow heights in the all-St. Louis World Series against the Browns as he led the Red Birds in hitting with a .412 average that only one Brownie exceeded.



The guy had proved his label as a classy fielder in 1944, and led the league that year in double plays. Reputed a light hitter, he had managed to hit exactly as he had in his previous minor league season at Columbus, a .257, which was all the Cards had desired. Last year he made a tremendous advance. He strummed his banjo bat to .278 "heights" while making such great strides as a fielder as to outrank all other second basemen in the league.

These modest achievements made Verban feel during the winter that he had a fighting chance for the Cards' keystone job, despite the extra-base slugging edge that Lou Klein, back from military service, would have.

Emil doesn't think he got that chance in spring training. Klein, fresh from a winter of playing in the Cuban League, was given the edge from the day he reported. When the schedule opened, Klein was at second

base. In fact, Verban didn't play even five seconds of 1946 ball for the St. Louisans, despite his record.

As Verban sat on the bench he seethed, but quietly. But he didn't "quit." While he hoped somehow to get his chance, or even to be traded, anywhere—just to get back in active harness again, he kept himself ready for whatever opportunity would develop. His only fear was that he might be a bench-warmer all season.

On May 1 he received a phone call from Red Bird Manager Eddie Dyer, informing him that he had been traded to the Phillies for Catcher Clyde Kluttz, whom the Phils only hours before had obtained from the Giants for Vince DiMaggio.

It was considerable satisfaction to Verban to hear that the deal wasn't a straight trade. Actually the Phils are supposed to have given up veteran second-sacker Danny Murtaugh (to Rochester, Cardinal farm), Kluttz and \$40,000 for Verban. That's going high.

Was Verban ready? He joined the Phils in Cincinnati, played his first game on May 3 when he walked, stole second and scored on Johnny Wyrostek's single to enable Al Jurisich to win a four-hitter from the Reds, 1-0.

That day Herb Pennock, the Phils' general manager, phoned him from Philadelphia and told him that he'd work out a new contract with him as soon as the team finished its road trip.

And that was another break for Verban. When the trip was finished on May 13, Verban had pounded out a .355 average, a performance that was a factor in Pennock's giving Verban a

new contract with a substantial raise over what the Cards were paying him.

In many ways the story of Verban in 1946 is difficult to separate from the resurrection of the Phils in 1946, for much of the glow of the once dismal team dates back first to the day Emil joined the team on May 3 and later to a new "needle" date, May 28, when Manager Ben Chapman was given a new contract through the 1947 season.

Actually one might go back to winter days of 1946 and to the DuPont dollars and determination of the Phils' new owner, young, energetic, Robert M. Carpenter, Jr., for it was he who opened the pursestrings and lavishly bought himself practically a new team.

But with all that outlay of funds, the team was the same old last-place Phils, with a .231 average, when Verban joined the team. Maybe it was a case of all the new cogs slowly getting acquainted and being molded into a playing unit by Chapman. Or maybe the Verban addition to the team was the catalytic agent that precipitated a new DuPont fabric—a baseball bonanza.

Whatever the reason that finally will be agreed upon, the fact remains that as the Phils stepped well into the second half of the schedule they had played at a .460 pace since Verban began working his far-ranging fielding magic at second base. And that's a pace exceeded by only two Phillie teams in the last twenty-eight years—the 1929 and the 1932 varsities.

Manager Chapman will tell you that Verban has "made" the infield; that his sparkling ability has knit it into a reasonably tight unit that is cutting

off hits and enabling pitchers to turn in better, major league performances.

The pitchers will tell you that Verban is the team's most valuable player because, principally on account of him, they have more confidence in their defense.

Strength "down the middle" has always been one of the vital things that managers strive to develop. Chapman feels that Verban is that extra added something to that "line" that includes Andy Seminick behind the bat, assisted by the veteran Rollie Hemsley; Verban at second and either Skeeter Newsome or Roy Hughes at shortstop and Charley Gilbert in center field.

Verban, in his early enthusiasm, was trying to cover too much ground, and committed ten errors in his first thirty games. But thereafter he settled down. He and First Sacker Frank McCormick and the two shortstops began knitting together more smoothly and the errors dropped off. After that Emil had one streak in which he made only one error in forty games including a streak of twenty-eight contests without a bobble.

The "banjo kid," while getting his hits consistently, has come up with some hot streaks. Besides that .370 "introductory offer" of batting assistance in his first seven Phillie games, Verban had a .500 streak while the team was winning six out of seven games; another of .327 for fifteen games, and still another of .445 for



ten games. In all, he has been hitting and fielding slightly better than he did last year, which has more than justified the judgment of the Phils in buying him.

While this is Verban's eleventh season in pro ball, his career—not to mention his

life—was nearly snapped short eight years ago when he was with Decatur in the Three-I League. The incident occurred in a night exhibition game at Decatur with the St. Louis Cardinals in 1938.

Paul Dean, running out his string as a once great pitcher, was on the mound for St. Louis. Verban, who then had a boxer's crouching stance at the bat, with his head cocked over the plate, came up about the fourth inning. As he watched one of Dean's pitches come to the plate, he became hypnotized by it and in trying to duck his head away from it accidentally dipped his head into it. The ball struck with a sickeningly loud thud and Verban collapsed inert to the ground.

Paul Dean, whom Catcher Spud Davis thought had a faster pitch than the colorful Dizzy in 1934, was distraught, thinking he had killed Verban. Many others weren't too sure he hadn't. Emil lay unconscious for many hours. When the Cards left that night, Dean stayed. Late the next day Verban began to show slight improvement, but he was finished with baseball for the season. Weeks after he complained of headaches and dizzy spells



and he only saw a few of the final Decatur games. It was thought his baseball career was ended.

But the next season he came back brightly, without any shyness at the bat, and again continued his climb in baseball.

The son of parents who were born and raised in Yugoslavia, Emil was discovered as a baseball prospect by L. J. Wylie, president of the Three-I League. Wylie at that time was a scout for the Cincinnati Reds. During his first three years, Verban batted .276 for Fremont, .330 for Tiffin and .274 for the Alexandria and was the property of the Cincinnati Reds, New York Giants and Detroit Tigers, all of whom felt he didn't have major league possibilities and turned him down.

Equally convinced that he did have a chance—and above all that he didn't like the Louisiana bayou country (and their B-29 mosquitoes!), Verban wired his friend Wylie for a chance to play with Decatur, a Cardinal farm. The deal was arranged. Two seasons followed there where he batted .320 and .272. In two campaigns at Asheville, his hitting held up but his fielding went bizarre, with total chances high—and total errors high too! In 1942 he had a good year with Houston, batting .303 in that tough hitting Texas

League and making only eighteen errors.

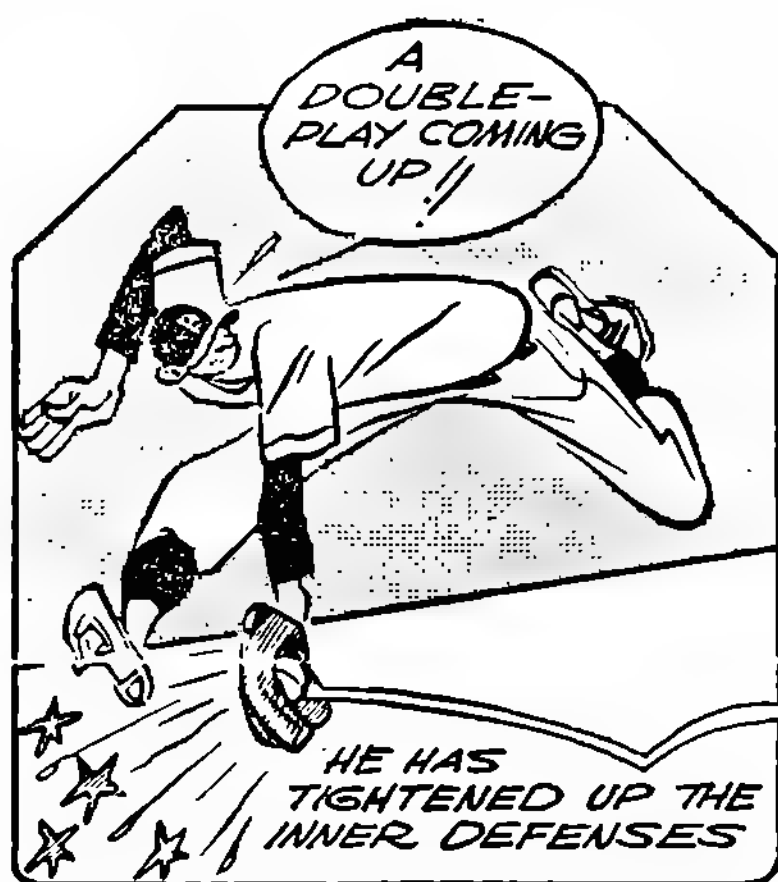
Even another good year at Columbus, 1943, where he hit .257 and fielded well would have gone for naught if military service hadn't drained the Cards of second base talent—Frank (Creepy) Crespi, Jimmy Brown and Lou Klein. Reluctantly, the Cards called in "good field, no hit" Verban—and never regretted it.

Verban, a fast man, is considered by many as the farthest ranging second sacker in the league and the best pivot man on double plays. The association for two years with the great Cardinal "Octopus," Marty Marion was all that was

needed to bring out the finest in the son of the Balkans.

Philadelphia considers Emil the finest keystone it has had in at least a couple of decades. When he and his roommate, rookie outfielder Del Ennis, were chosen for the midsummer all-star game in Boston, the reawakened Philadelphians considered it as just a natural phase of a thoroughly unnatural season.

When the season's final games are played, Philadelphia may again be down at the cellar location, but the Quaker city fans will feel they have had their biggest season of thrills. They actually had a fighting ball club,



one that no club (except the Bums of Brooklyn) could call "cousins" any longer.

As Philadelphia still set its hopes on at least a sixth place finish, the team could look back on a season that already had produced the club's best road trip ever, winning ten out of fourteen; the best Saturday crowd, the best Sunday attendance, the highest night crowd and already the best season's attendance in the club's history.

While no one person, Carpenter, Chapman, Pennock, Verban or any of the other many new hustling players could be credited as the guy who had made all these giddy things come true in one season, it seems generally agreed that Verban had a big role in the Philly revival.

Verban surely is one of the many

1946 regrets that the Cardinals were sure to have. They had to make so many players deals, they were bound to make mistakes. While they regretted greatly the loss of Max Lanier, Freddie Martin and Lou Klein to the Mexican League, their big pang came in that raid's timing. Had it come before May 1, they'd have kept Verban and that would have enabled them to keep hard-hitting Al Schoendienst in the outfield and strengthened the team's offense.

For Verban, strangely enough, as the season slipped well past the half-way mark, was out hitting such reputed batters as Cardinal outfielders Terry Moore, Harry Walker, Buster Adams and Erv Dusak.

Verily, verdant Verban had verified the Phillie verdict of him.

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### ***Faint Praise***

UMPIRE BILL MCGOWAN chuckles now as he thinks of a game he once officiated in Washington:

"I had to call several close decisions against the Senators. Late in the game a Washington batter fouled a fast ball into the grandstand. I looked back to see a woman being carried out.

"'Did the ball hit that woman?' I asked Nick Altrock, who was coaching at third. He answered, in a voice loud enough to be heard by everyone in the stands: 'No, you called that one right—and she fainted!'"

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### ***They "Catch" on in A. L.***

WHEN IT COMES to managers, the A.L. prefers catchers, while the older circuit leans to infielders. The Yanks' Bill Dickey is the fourth former backstop piloting in his league, the others being Connie Mack, A's; Steve O'Neill, Tigers, and Luke Sewell, Browns. In the N.L., the graduate infielders in charge are Leo Durocher, Dodgers; Bill McKechnie, Reds; Charlie Grimm, Cubs; Frankie Frisch, Pirates, and Ben Chapman, Phils (who started as infielder but later switched to outfielder and pitcher).

# Splitting Sale Money Dangerous

BY H. G. SALSINGER

*Condensed from the Detroit News*

**O**NE OF THE objects of the new baseball players guild is to have clubs pay a percentage of the sales price to a player whenever he is sold.

We thought that under the conditions the players were entitled to part of the purchase price. What, for instance, had Sam Breadon to do with the development of Dizzy Dean, whom he sold to the Chicago Cubs for \$185,000? Or the development of Ducky Medwick, whom he sold to the Brooklyn Dodgers for \$125,000? Or, more recently, the development of Walker Cooper for whose contract he received \$175,000 from the New York Giants? Since Dean, Medwick and Cooper were personally responsible for the talent which netted Breadon nearly half a million dollars, why should they not be paid a percentage of the money?

One of the veteran major league managers now tells us that we are completely wrong.

He says we are wrong for the following reason:

"Agree to pay players a percentage of the purchase price and watch a lot of them stall.

"We'll say that Chicago has a very good infielder who would like to play with Detroit. He knows that the Detroit club will likely pay a lot more money for him than any other club and so, what does he do? He'll play for his release. He'll become so bad that the Chicago club is going to get rid of him to the highest bidder. The player will go to a club that will pay him a higher salary and he'll get a slice of a big purchase to boot.

"This is not an entirely strange procedure. It's been done before and if you think back you can recall several instances where players played for their release. It's not an uncommon practice, although less common than a dozen years ago.

"Imagine what it would be if players cut into the purchase price! I can think of a couple of gents who would get themselves sold every few years and do quite well through these sales."

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## ***From a Fireball, No Doubt***

IN A GAME in the Kansas-Oklahoma-Missouri League, an umpire's chest protector caught on fire and he had to put himself out. The fans no doubt booed him for making another bad decision.—*Tommy Fitzgerald in the Louisville Courier-Journal.*

# He's a Better Berardino

BY THE OLD SCOUT

*Condensed from the New York Sun*

**Y**OU DON'T have to hold a microscope over the former service men back in the big leagues to discover that most of them are not what they used to be at their trade. This is common knowledge. Even Ted Williams concedes he was a sharper, more consistent hitter before the war.

But there are a few rare exceptions, players who are hitting, or pitching, better than they did in the old days, and one of the most prominent is Johnny Berardino, second baseman of the St. Louis Browns.

Berardino is a twenty-nine-year-old Californian, who does credit to his native state by his immaculate attire. All season Johnny has been one of the American League's leading hitters, after putting in a four-year hitch in the Army and then the Navy, and heading into August his average was .332, just sixty-nine points better than the lifetime record he achieved in four pre-war seasons with the Brownies.

How did he get that way? What did the Army and the Navy feed him? How could one G.I. make such a vast improvement where others were huffing and puffing and becoming acutely conscious of a popular G.I. phrase: "Oh, my aching back!"

Berardino laughed and said: "Well, let's start from the beginning. If you will look at my work before I enrolled

in the Army as an air cadet, you will note a steady improvement. I moved from .256 to .258, then to .271, and in one month during 1942 to .284.

"Well, in the Army I didn't make the grade as a flier and I was lucky after washing out to get into the Navy as an athletic specialist. I paid special attention to my physical condition. I like to play a lot of tennis and badminton and I had the opportunity both in the States and in Hawaii.

"I took this training seriously. I kept my legs in real good shape and managed to play ball in the summer months too. I didn't fool myself into believing that when the war was over and I got back to the Browns there would be a position just waiting for me with open arms. I knew I'd have to prove myself all over again. So when I came back I didn't even need any spring training, that's how good I felt.

"Another thing: In the Navy I had time to think. And I thought there was no reason why I should not be able to hit .300. I had two good legs and arms, I am around six feet tall and I weigh 175 pounds. My eyes and reflexes are normal.

"I said to myself 'The trouble with you is that you are always trying to knock the cover off the ball. You are not as big as DiMaggio or Williams or some of the guys on your own club,

but you are swinging just as hard. That's all wrong. When you get back just hit the ball where it is pitched. Meet it. Get those hits.'

"Manager Luke Sewell has me hitting second, and that's fine because I have learned to hit behind the runner. Our club has bigger guys than me to hit the home runs. I've got some homers, but I am not swinging as hard as I used to, and that has helped."

"Johnny," said the reporter, "I gather from this that you are better because the Navy helped make you so."

Berardino thought a moment, then replied: "That's hard to say. A ball player has plenty of time to think between seasons, too, and there is no reason why I wouldn't have come along just the same if I were not in the Service."

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## ***The Lost Art of Sliding***

MAJOR LEAGUE baseball players lost the art of correct sliding "in the bushes," says Ben Chapman. The manager of the Phillies ruefully admits that correct sliding form is nearly extinct in the big leagues, but he blames lack of adequate coaching in the nation's minor loops for the dilemma.

"A ball player must learn how to slide when he's young or he'll never learn," Ben says. "My high school coach taught me. That's when a boy should be taught—in his formative years."

"After a player has been in organized baseball for five years, he knows how to slide or he doesn't, and he'll not change much."

Chapman, in his heyday as a New York Yankee outfielder, was often regarded as a champion and a stylist at stealing bases—getting to the bag safely by deceptive slides.

The Phillies chieftain says the trouble with big league base-running and sliding today is "the runner concedes the putout." "When the ball's at the base ahead of the runner that's when he should put on his slide, and concede nothing," he declares. "If he watches the defensive man, the runner can tell where the throw's coming. If it's coming in to his right, he should fall away to his feet in a hook slide that would catch the bag with his right foot."

"There are quite a few big leaguers who know how to slide, but too few observe the tipoff action of the fielder and slide accordingly. I'm for the runner who tries, and doesn't give up when the ball beats him in. Never concede the putout, and you'll make many a base, and win many a ball game."

But Chapman insists that "if good instructors teach kids how to slide, the lost art of correct sliding will soon be regained."



# Priddy Good—and Then Some

BY SHIRLEY POVICH

*Condensed from the Washington Post*

**G**ERRY PRIDDY is my favorite player on the Washington club, despite the fact he doesn't hit .300, isn't fast on the bases, strikes out quite a lot, and is not flashy as a rule.

Second base is the best-handled position on the Senators, I think. Priddy does everything around the bag that Bobby Doerr does for the Red Sox, and Doerr is accepted as tops among the league's second basemen. This year Priddy had a respectable mid-season batting average of .283, and only Mickey Vernon and Stan Spence had driven in more runs for the club.

But Priddy's value to the club is not adequately defined by the figures. He plays the game with more zest than any other man on the team, takes defeat harder, thinks the Senators should win all the time, and is unhappy when they lose.

To Washington he has brought a bit of the Yankee competitive spirit that stands out on an otherwise dead-fish club. When Joe McCarthy released Priddy to the Senators as an after-math of the Roy Cullenbine-Bill Zuber deal in 1941, he said frankly, "I may be making a mistake. Priddy is the best ball player I ever let go."

Even when Priddy boots a ball, he reacts like a big leaguer. With him there is no hokum about examining an imaginary pebble, or a frayed glove

or otherwise offering the hint of an alibi. He simply returns to his position with a new grimness and readies himself for the next play.

Priddy wants everybody else on the club to take the game as seriously as he does, and be just as alive. He got punched in the nose in Detroit in 1942 by Mickey Vernon for too loudly berating Vernon for failing to make a cut-off play that gave the Tigers a run, and he punched Vernon back and said, "I hope this wakes you up out there on the infield."

When Priddy was making headlines with Phil Rizzuto as the wonder double-play pair at Kansas City in the late 30's, Priddy generally was rated as the better ball player of the two. He was Rizzuto's roommate and a sort of guardian, too, for the little Italian lad, took him to the proper places, helped him to answer his fan letters from girl admirers.

On their arrival with the Yankees, there was a ready place for Rizzuto at shortstop with the aging Frankie Crosetti fading from the picture, but Priddy was fated to sit on the Yankees' bench. Joe Gordon was then the league's incomparable second baseman and the Rizzuto-Priddy team was broken up.

Priddy did get a brief fling at second base with the Yankees when the sick and slumping Lou Gehrig was

benched and Gordon was installed at first base as an experiment by Manager McCarthy. Priddy played well enough for the Yankees, but Gordon proved unadaptable to first base and moved back to second, and Priddy again was very much out of employment.

With the Senators Priddy has never had the kind of shortstop with whom he could get fancy on double plays and the Washington double-play production has suffered but not for any lack of skill on Priddy's part. His throwing arm is probably the best among the league's second basemen and while the Senators may miss a double play on a ground ball hit to Priddy, they rarely muff it when he is

the middle man making the pivot and throw.

Every once in a while Priddy can tee off on a ball, too. The Washington park with its distant left-field fence handicaps a right-handed hitter of Priddy's type, but the other day in Philadelphia he knocked a home run into the upper deck of left center field. But in Griffith Stadium he's too smart to over-swing.

Priddy sort of takes charge of the Washington infield in a sort of honorary captaincy because his judgment on how to play hitters is accepted as good. Even the guys on the team who resent him a little because he is somewhat bossy, say he is very smart. I think he ought to be a manager.

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## **Henrich, Trickster**

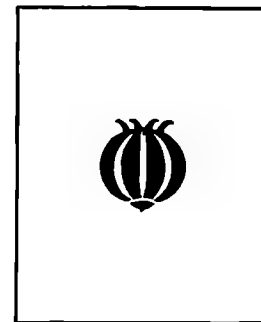
IN THE YANKEES' dugout Red Rolfe was talking about Tommy Henrich's skill at trapping a fly ball in right field with a man on first base—that is, taking the ball on the first hop instead of on the fly, then whipping it to first base ahead of the hitter and starting a double play on the startled runner who, expecting the ball to be caught, remains close to the bag. Until Henrich revived it, this play virtually had been dormant since the time when Ross Youngs was right fielder for the Giants, twenty years or more ago. Nowadays it is more difficult to execute than it was when Youngs used to delight John McGraw with it, for then an outfielder actually could catch the ball, completely confusing the hitter, then drop it, pick it up and make the throw. Under the present rule if he catches it, the batter is out and the runner on first base simply holds the bag.

"The chance Tommy takes is that the ball will hop badly," Red said, "but in order to protect himself as much as possible against that he practices the play constantly. And don't forget, he is an exceptionally clever fielder. Watch him on base hits out there. He fields the ball like an infielder and comes up with it in perfect position for a throw. Incidentally, I think he is the most under-rated ball player in the league—and nothing he does give me a bigger kick than his trapping the ball. Three times so far he has turned a simple fly ball into a double play."—*Frank Graham in the New York Journal-American.*

# Cartoon Di-Jests



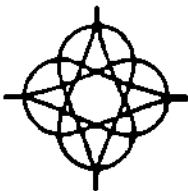
"They got him in a trade with the Mexican League!"



"Well, I'd better be getting back to the plate, Lefty—there goes that slow ball you pitched a few seconds ago!"



"He never gets a hit anyway, so he never bothers with a bat."





# Fenway Fence No Factor

BY ARTHUR SAMPSON

*Condensed from the Boston Herald*

**W**Henever a rival manager or a visiting team player is asked what he thinks of the Red Sox he usually mentions the fact that they are practically invincible in their own Fenway Park.

"They're just another ball club on the road, but they're sensational in their ball park with its short left field fence," is a statement we've heard time after time this season. But when you ask, "Why," nobody provides a reasonable answer. The creators of this statement stare at you in astonishment. They take it for granted that you're kidding.

Perhaps somebody will come up with a satisfactory explanation soon. Maybe somebody will finally get wise to the fact that the left field fence is playing little or no part in the home success of the Red Sox this year. Oh, Bobby Doerr kisses one over the chummy barrier now and then and quite often belts against it. And Rudy York has pulled a few drives against or over the wall.

But nobody can say that the short left field fence has helped Ted Williams hit home runs or elevate his batting average.

And if the left field fence has helped Hal Wagner, Johnny Pesky, Cat Metkovich and Dom DiMaggio, we haven't been around when it has been of noticeable assistance.

Dom was a pull hitter before the

war. He hit almost everything to left field. He has changed his batting stance this year, however, and he now hits the ball to right and center as often as he does to left. This is also true of York.

Some of York's longest drives this year have been to right center and left center, where the field is plenty deep. He has pulled a few drives down the left field foul line. In fact, the Red Sox have been helped less by the short left field fence this year than any year we can remember.

It's obvious that the current Red Sox play better baseball at home than they do on the road. The records prove that beyond any argument. They've always been a poor road team and a good team at home, even when finishing well down in the race. But in other years there seemed to be a logical reason. This time there seems to be no sense to it at all.

It was understandable that the Sox should find the going difficult away from home when they were studded with right handed batters who pulled the ball.

When the lineup included Jimmy Foxx, Joe Cronin, Eric McNair, Mike Higgins, Rick Ferrell, Buster Mills and other powerful right-handed batters, it was easy to see why they could win consistently at home and have their troubles in foreign territory. The

drives which these boys caressed the fence with at home were easy outs in Cleveland, Chicago, St. Louis, New York and Washington.

That club would win twelve out of fifteen at home and go West near the top of the league. During the western tour it would win three and lose twelve and come home in fourth place. Then it would put on another winning spurt that would carry it close to the top while at home.

But the current Red Sox are not a custom built team. They haven't been fashioned to the Fenway Park pattern

at all. They should hit just as well in New York, St. Louis, Cleveland, Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia and Washington as at Fenway Park. In fact they should hit better in some of those other parks than they do at their home lot.

The shortness of the left field is not the reason, however, despite the fact that it is regarded as the logical and obvious answer. There may be a psychological factor there somewhere that prevents this 1946 team from doing as well on the road as at home. But whatever is the explanation, it's not the one generally given.

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## Tris Got His

JOE E. (THE MOUTH) BROWN recently recalled his experiences as part owner of the Kansas City franchise some twelve years ago—and one in particular that still gives him a laugh. Brown, with Lee Keyser and Bill (Rawmeat) Rodgers, bought the Blues from George Muehlebach. The great Tris Speaker was made manager and incidentally had a wretched eighth place club. But the laugh, as Brown recalls it: To arouse interest among the fans Speaker and he framed a fight between Art Shires, then with Columbus, and Duster Mails, who was then tossing his ancient curves for the Blues.

"The idea was to have Speaker rush out on the field to break up the fight," Brown recalled. "Everything at first went as planned. The boys started their fight all right but when the time came for Speaker to do his part, there was nothing but trouble. As Tris jumped off the bench he first almost knocked himself out bumping his head on the dugout. Next as he half staggered on the field, he looked a sight and finally in the melee, one of the contestants spiked Tris on the foot. Neither Mails nor Shires was hurt. Speaker wisely suggested later not to frame any more fights. We didn't."—*Sam Levy in the Milwaukee Journal.*

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WHEN a fan asked Paul McCoy, Kansas umpire, if he minded the boos that followed some of his decisions, Paul replied: "Not at all. I learned a long time ago that the wire fence in back of the plate is to protect the umpire, not the fans."

# A Belated Cheer for Nat Hicks

BY ARTHUR DALEY

*Condensed from the New York Times*

**T**HE OLD BALTIMORE Orioles of the McGraw-Robinson-Jennings era were supposed to have been the toughest, rip-snortingest and hardest-boiled set of ball players that the game ever knew. According to popular supposition, they used as an antidote for all injuries a liberal application of extract of chewing tobacco and, thus cured, continued with their chores. At least that's the fable which has been handed down to the present generation.

But long before the scrappy Orioles made their fulsome contributions to the diamond sport, there were other pioneers whose deeds of derring-do have long been forgotten. The celebration a few weeks ago of the centennial of baseball's first "match game" caused the musty pages of the sport's history to be turned. In the course of the turning the name of Nat Hicks bobbed into view.

To the fans of today the name hardly means a thing. It's quite possible that neither Bill Dickey nor Walker Cooper ever heard of him. But he's the chap who revolutionized their business for them and made catching a relatively simple art. Until this rugged individualist came down the pike in 1866, the receivers had made the habit of standing some fifty feet behind the batter (then known as the "striker") and catching each pitch on the first bounce.

Base runners ran wild on them, of course, and diamond scores mounted into perfectly ridiculous figures. But Hicks changed that. He moved right up behind the pantalooned striker and caught each pitch on the fly. Remember, if you will, that the pitching distance then was forty-five feet, instead of the present sixty, and they threw just as hard in those days as they do now.

The incredible part of it all is that the sturdy Mr. Hicks did it without benefit of shin guards, chest protector, mask or—how do you like this?—even a glove. He just used his bare hands. In his weaker moments, however, such as when he had a couple of fingers broken, he turned sissy by reinforcing them by strapping on chunks of raw beef. Nowadays, a catcher's mitt is easier to get than a chunk of raw beef. But we're wandering.

The punishment the stout-hearted and thick-skinned Hicks absorbed was amazing. He lasted only eleven years in the big time, but during that period he had every finger in his hand broken at least once, his wrist broken, his eyebrow shattered, his nose smashed and, in a career-ending climax, his kneecap broken while trying to block off famed Pop Anson at the plate. One extracurricular break—more or less—came when he got into an argument with an umpire, and that impetuous gent tried

to whack him on the noggin with a bat as a quaint method of convincing him of the error of his ways. Hicks put up his arm to ward off the blow and had it broken.

His most spectacular performance, perhaps, was in a game at the old Union Grounds in New York on July 4, 1873. This involved the Mutuals, later the first team to represent New York in the National League, against the champion Atlantics of Brooklyn. The Mutual battery was Bobby Matthews and Nat Hicks, and so effective were they the Mutuals won easily. When Henry (Pop) Chadwick, first of the great baseball writers, penned Hicks' obituary for *The New York Times* in 1907, he emphasized this game—even if he was slightly gory in the telling. He wrote:

"In consequence of the serious injuries lately received by Hicks, it was thought that he could not play at all, or that, if he attempted to play in his crippled condition, he would bungle it. But they were greatly mistaken, for he actually won it by his brilliant play. He went into the game with his right eye almost knocked out of his head, and his nose and the whole right side of his face swollen to three times their normal size. Yet, nothing seemed too difficult for him to take.

"Player after player went down before his unfaltering nerve, and although struck four times during the game—once squarely in the mouth by the ball and once on the chest as well as twice with the bat—he could not be driven away from his post. Taken in all, no

man ever exhibited more nerve and pluck, combined with cool, calculating judgment, than did this man, and he deserved all the applause and commendation he received."

Perhaps the simplest way to evaluate his services in that important struggle is to glance at the statistics. Hicks was credited with eleven putouts, while the Atlantic catcher made only three putouts and one assist. Chadwick also wrote on another occasion: "Hicks is the fastest and most accurate thrower in the game."

He was poison to the base runners and both a nuisance and a challenge to his fellow catchers. When he first began to move right up behind the batter early in his career, other catchers were virtually forced to do the same.

The Hicks technique behind the plate not only had a revolutionary effect on the catching department but also caused a radical change in the pitching as well. Arthur Cummings "invented" the curve ball while pitching to the close-up Hicks in 1870, three years before the baseball rules formally legalized it. Later with the Phillies of 1874 the battery of Cummings and Hicks had no superior.

Cummings has been formally installed in the Hall of Fame at Coopers-town, while Hicks has been generally overlooked. Any man who took the risks he recklessly took in his bare-hand catching style deserves some measure of glory. Those old Orioles couldn't have been so tough after all. Nat Hicks undoubtedly was baseball's original tough guy.

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# Charging Dom Di Maggio

BY ED RUMILL

*Condensed from The Christian Science Monitor*

**O**NE OF the rarely stressed reasons for the amazing pace of the Boston Red Sox this season is the great all-around defensive play of Dom Di Maggio, the baby of baseball's royal family. Joe Cronin's pitchers and his muscle men at the plate have been given credit for racking up the victories, but the slick center fielding of the Little Professor has been the backbone of many a triumph.

Hughie Duffy mentioned this the other day, as he sat in the press box at Fenway Park.

"You can't show me an outfielder today who can go and get a ball better than Dom," remarked the man who once hit .438 in the majors and now runs daily morning workouts at Fenway for New England boys with pro baseball ambitions.

Di Maggio's greatest play? Was it the day he climbed the screen in front of the left-center field stands at Briggs Stadium and made a glove-hand stab of Rudy York's bid for an extra base hit?

"No," Dom replied when queried. "I'd have to pick the one I took off Crash Davis one time in Philadelphia. It was a line drive just over short-stop, in the hole between Ted (Williams) and myself. I couldn't see the ball very well as it came out. It became a blur along the edge of the

stands. I honestly didn't think I could get it. But I ran over on the double, reached out backhand with my glove where I thought the ball ought to be and it stuck in just a few inches off the ground. And you should have heard Ted!"

"I've seen them all, including Tris Speaker, and I tell you the Little Professor is right up there with the greatest," resumed Duffy. "In fact, I'll tell you something he does even better than Speaker. Charges a ground ball."

The modest, clam-like Di Maggio gives you only half a grin when you suggest where he ranks among the great center fielders of the game. But if urged, he'll recall how he happened to play ground balls like an infielder.

"When I was playing sandlot and high school ball around San Francisco, I was an infielder," explains the young brother of Joe and Vince. "I used to stand at second base and watch runners race past me on their way to third, while our center fielder just stood still and waited for ground balls to come to him. Going from first to third on a single to the outfield was routine. We'd lose a lot of games that way, too. So I vowed that if I ever got the chance to play center field, I'd charge ground balls as they'd never been charged before."

There is an occasional inclination among critics to call the Little Pro-



fessor reckless in his favorite defensive act. "Supposing," they ask, "the ball gets past him?" But the best reply to that one is: "How many do?" Everyday patrons at Fenway are still waiting for it to happen.

"If I felt I was being reckless and hurting the club, I wouldn't do it," is Di Maggio's blunt comeback to the suggestion. "If you get in front of the ball, how can it get past you? I

know exactly how fast I can come in on a ball and not be taking any chances.

"Another thing," the Little Professor continued. "People ask me how I can throw off balance. The truth is, I never do. There are times, after getting a ball to the side, when I can get a throw away quicker sidearm than overhand, but that doesn't mean I'm off balance."

### **\$32,000 a Year at First Base**

**T**HAT THE REDS are carrying two first basemen this season in Bert Haas and Eddie Shokes reminds of another occasion when the Cincinnati club also had a pair of doorkeepers and what an expensive proposition it was.

The time was back in the days when the Redleg management decided to get rid of Eddie Roush. The star center fielder was a tough cookie to sign each spring and the Cincinnati management figured they would use Roush in a trade and thus pass the headache of getting Eddie's name annually on the dotted line to somebody else. The brilliant fly chaser was then getting \$18,000 per year.

John McGraw coveted Roush for his Giants and the Reds were interested in Long George Kelly, then the Little Napoleon's first baseman. However, the Reds had a first-class doorkeeper in Wallie Pipp, but they thought that Kelly could be converted into a second baseman. They had seen Kelly play one game at the keystone for the Giants and were much impressed.

Anyhow, the deal—Roush for Kelly—was negotiated. The next spring Kelly went south with the Reds and was stationed at second base. However, it soon became apparent that "High Pockets" was out of his element at the position and it was necessary to get him out of there.

So it was that the Reds found themselves with two high-salaried first basemen on their hands, only one of whom could be played at a time. But the real nub of the story is that Kelly, not pleased at all over his passing from the ranks of the Giants, also made the Cincinnati management pay through the nose when it came to signing him.

The Reds, having sent Roush away, could not afford to begin the training season minus Kelly. The result was that Kelly battled for and secured a contract calling for \$19,000, a grand more than the club had been paying Roush. Pipp was drawing down \$13,000. Consequently, the combined stipends of the two first basemen, ran \$32,000. Thus in their anxiety to get Roush off their hands the Cincinnati management pulled a deal that cost them a pretty penny.—*Bob Husted in the Dayton (O.) Herald.*

# Crashing into the Lineup

BY HAROLD C. BURR

*Condensed from the Brooklyn Eagle*

**O**UT OF a collision at second base at St. Louis that sent Ed Stanky to the hospital came a new Brooklyn infielder. Bob Ramazzotti threw away his black Italian cheroot, and went to the midway for the rest of the Cardinal series. He turned out to be the Brooklyn star of the four-game set. The Ram blew himself to nine hits in sixteen times at bat. He protects the plate and does as he's told at all times.

He choked off several Red Bird rallies with his fielding and didn't make a slip out on the crescent of dirt. Bob had never played the bag before. "He's a better third baseman," declare the other rookies, who were with him on the Rickey plantations before the war. But you might have thought he had covered second base all his life in the big leagues. He has the poise and the execution. In a big shakeup at Cincinnati Bob went back to his old battle station at the hot corner, replacing the slumping Cookie Lavagetto.

Before the team went West, the fans in Brooklyn jeered when the Lip sent Bob up to pinch hit. He had done an odd chore or so around third, but had been chiefly used as a pinch hitter. They didn't boo when he returned to Flatbush. The Altoona youngster won his spikes of gold in the toughest competition a Dodger ball player has

to face—a losing series at Sportsman's Park against a hot Cardinal ball club.

IT'S HAPPENED before—a raw recruit jumping into the lineup to sub for an injured or sick veteran and making good with a bang. Years ago Miller Huggins happened to notice Wallie Pipp, the regular Yankee first baseman—and a good one, too—go over to the medicine cabinet at the Stadium and swallow a couple of pills.

"What's wrong, Wallie?" asked the Midget Manager. "Aren't you feeling well?"

"No, Hug," confessed Pipp. "I've got a headache."

"Well, you won't have to play today. We're not going any place. I can put that kid Lou Gehrig on first base."

Every fan in the country knows the rest of it. Pipp never got his job back. Locomotive Lou went steadily on to set his amazing consecutive game record until a little germ you couldn't see except under the microscope sent him into the dugout shadows forever.

ONE DAY a black-haired youngster from New England reported to the Athletics, his catching mitt tucked under his arm. Cy Perkins, Connie Mack's first string receiver, was from New England, too, and he took the rookie under his wing. He taught

him all he knew about catching, which was considerable.

It wasn't long before the fiery Mickey Cochrane was going under the bat regularly. He was a better hitter than Cy. He blistered his own pitchers with insults. There were no passed balls with Cochrane intrepidly blocking the wildest of pitches—and Perkins lost his first string assignment. When Mickey finally burned himself out by the fury of his play Cy was too old to do anything about it and became a bullpen catcher.

HAL JANVRIN was a young second baseman with the Red Sox in 1916. But before they clinched the Ameri-

can League pennant Steve Yerkes, their veteran second sacker, was sidelined for the rest of the campaign with a leg injury, and Janvrin went to the midway.

"I was on the spot," said Hal. "I knew that if we lost the flag the fans would say it was my fault, that if Yerkes had been in the game we would have won."

But it didn't get the rookie down. He played good ball down the stretch, the Flame Hose were returned the winners and they went on to beat the Dodgers in the World Series. The next year Hal Janvrin was still the second baseman and Yerkes never did break into the lineup again.

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## No Grounds for Complaint

NO ONE ever worked harder for perfection than Bobby Dorr, superintendent of grounds, who is the oldest Cub employe, having moved to Chicago from Rochester in 1919 under Fred Mitchell. Bobby is always looking for new tricks to improve his field. One day he picked up a handful of black dirt off the bottom of a truck that had hauled in sod for the football season. Bobby liked the feel of this "adobe," as he calls it. He experimented and discovered that by mixing this adobe five to one with finely sifted soft coal ashes he got the finest possible soil for the base paths of the infield—better than the "bank wash" used at the Polo Grounds, previously rated as the best field of all.

For the pitcher's and batter's boxes, Bobby uses blue clay from the brick kilns at Stickney, Ill. His "adobe" comes from nearby Bartlett, and his sod is a specially grown mixture of Kentucky blue grass and fancy white clover produced by the suburban Flossmoor Nurseries. Sod is too brittle until it has had three years of growth to be used on athletic fields.

Bobby probably appreciates a good playing field better than most men who specialize in that field because of his experiences in his own playing days on the oyster shell infields down around Baltimore. Infields made of ground oyster shells were prevalent in the little towns in that region where he used to play. There was a terrific glare off those infields, which became very hard after long usage.—*Ralph Cannon in the Chicago Herald-American.*

# Here's a 1-1-5-2 Defense!

BY GORDON COBBLEDICK

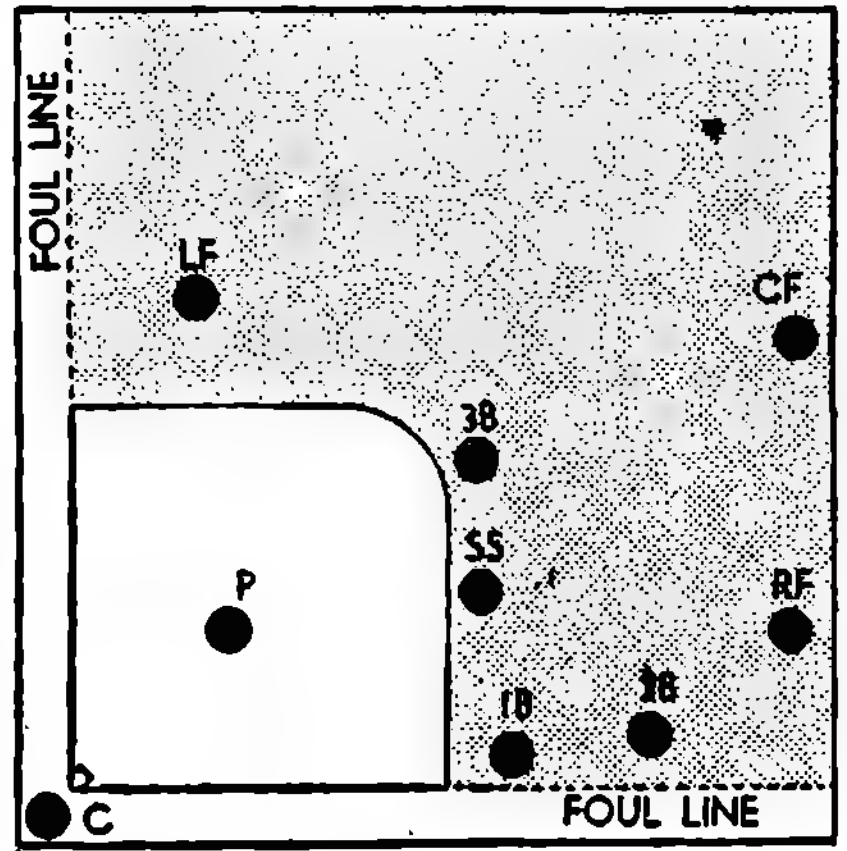
*Condensed from the Cleveland Plain Dealer*

**T**HE DEFENSE devised by Lou Boudreau against Ted Williams' bombing attacks has been the subject of much joking, but it made sense. So did the 1-1-5-2 defense proposed by Frankie Pytlak some years ago, which, because it never was unveiled except on a dining car tablecloth, did not receive the public attention it merited.

Frankie had been brooding darkly for several days and the Cleveland Indians were busily speculating upon the nature of the activity behind the iron curtain of that dynamic mind. One school of thought believed that he would presently announce one of his periodic retirements and hit the trail for Buffalo. Another held that he was writing a book on inside baseball. When finally he returned to the world of reality it was to propound a revolutionary departure from orthodox strategy.

"It's the last of the ninth," he said dreamily as a group gathered about his table. "The score's tied and the other guys have got a man on third with one out. You know what I mean?—a fly ball scores him and the ball game's over.

"So what do we do? We call in Joe Heving to pitch because he can throw that sinker and make the guy hit the ball on the ground. He hits it on the



A LA BOUDREAU

Here's the way the Cleveland Indians executed their trick defense against Ted Williams. With none on base, Lou Boudreau stationed himself and five others on the grass in right field. The first baseman was near the foul line. Lou himself was next in line between first and second and the third baseman was near second base.

Midway from the base path to the wall was the second baseman and the right and center fielders were as deep as possible in right.

The left fielder was spotted about twenty feet in back of the shortstop's normal post.

ground, all right, but he hits it in the hole between the third baseman and shortstop and we lose. Why? Because everybody in this business seems to think the rules compel 'em to have four men in the infield and three in the outfield. You want to know what I'd do?"

Nobody voiced an eager "Yes," but Frankie continued:

"I'd have five infielders. I mean I'd pull one guy in from the outfield or I'd take an outfielder outa the game and run in a utility infielder. And if the

hitter was right-handed, I'd have all except the first baseman bunched up on the left side of the diamond and if he was left-handed, I'd have all except the third baseman over on the other side. To guard against a bunt, you know.

"Then when we pulled our infield in to cut off that run at the plate we'd have four guys so close together that you couldn't shoot a deer rifle between 'em. And I'd pitch to make the hitter hit in that direction."

Pytlak's hearers were beginning to utter derisive noises. Some were casting meaningful glances at others, as if to say: "Gosh, it's worse than I feared!" Some were openly tapping forefingers against their heads or using them to pencil invisible circles in the air.

"What," asked one, "happens when this guy accidentally hits a squib to the wrong side of the infield? Don't we look a little silly with nobody there to field it?"

Frankie was undismayed.

"Didn't you ever hear of percentage?" he asked scornfully. "I'm not claiming I can always cut off that run. I'm just increasing the percentage. I'm trying to make the guy hit on the ground and I'm trying to make him hit a certain direction. Maybe four times out of ten he'll hit some other place, but if I've got six chances running for me I'll win oftener than I'll lose. So why ain't it percentage to block that side of the infield so he can't hit through it?"

No one was convinced at the time, but after a good many years of mulling

it over I am disposed to echo the question: "Why ain't it percentage?"

Boudreau's maneuver against Williams was even more radical than Pytlak's proposal. Not only did he leave the door wide open for a bunt down the third base line, but he went into his Illinois shift every time The Kid came to bat—not merely when the situation called for desperate do-or-die measures.

And he increased his percentage thereby, for the chance that Williams would bunt toward third or hit a ground ball to the left side of the infield is less than the chance that he would rifle one through an undefended spot on the right side. And if he did he would be sacrificing some of his own percentage—his home run percentage.

Come to think about it, maybe it would be smart to move the third baseman far out of position simply in order to tempt Williams to bunt. He could bunt .500 and do considerably less damage than he can do hitting .350.

There was a time, and not long gone, when football coaches accepted without question the principle that a line must be manned by seven players. Introduction of the roving center was a startling innovation. Now five-man defensive lines are common and four-man lines occasionally seen. Offensive developments have made defensive strategy a fluid matter.

Baseball is not football, but Ted Williams is an offensive development worthy of some thought. Any pitcher will tell you how offensive.



# They Did It for Cy Williams, Too

BY CHESTER L. SMITH

*Condensed from the Pittsburgh Press*

**I**N SHIFTING their entire defense to the right side of the field to try to stop Ted Williams, the Indians were copying a bit of strategy that was used in the National League twenty years ago.

It is a coincidence that the other man's name was also Williams.

He was Cy Williams, a big, powerfully-built outfielder who played with the Phillies. Like the Splendid Splinter of the Red Sox you could count the balls he hit to the left of second base on one hand and have enough fingers left to scratch a mosquito bite.

When Cy Williams came to the plate the third baseman moved to shortstop, the shortstop took the position usually occupied by the second baseman and the latter played first. The first sacker planted himself almost directly on the foul line, backed up by the right fielder.

After the center fielder had switched to medium right and the left fielder to center, the reception committee was ready.

Once that I can recall, old Cy slipped in a Mickey Finn by slicing an ordinary fly down the left field line. The left fielder had to run so far to retrieve the ball that Williams, who was anything but a sprinter, reached third in a breeze.

## WEAKNESS

Ted Lyons, manager of the Chicago White Sox, has his opinion of the weakness of the Cleveland Indians' fielding strategy against Ted Williams.

"Boudreau didn't put anyone in the right field bleachers," the Sox pilot says succinctly.

## When an Overshift Cost a Pennant

BY HERBERT SIMONS

*Condensed from Baseball Magazine*

**I**T WAS this same sort of trick infield alignment, only shifted the other way, that proved disastrous for Billy Herman and the other Chicago Cubs in 1937. Because Wally Berger was such a decided left field hitter, Herman found that when the New York Giants' outfielder was at bat, there was nothing for him to do around second except read a paper and, tolerant as Manager Charlie Grimm was, Herman knew he couldn't get away with that. So, desirous of occupying himself, he conceived the plan of shifting over to the third base side of second whenever Berger came to bat with no runner on first. That left the first-to-second beat all to the first baseman, of course. Several times in midseason Herman tried the stunt. Each time Berger hit to left, as expected, but far enough over so that either Shortstop Billy Jorges or Third



Baseman Stanley Hack came up with the ball.

Then the Cubs went into the Polo Grounds for a critical double-header late in August. They were about three games ahead of the Giants and the dope was that if they could sweep the twin bill, they'd be practically "in." Banging Carl Hubbell for ten hits and six runs, they went into the home ninth leading, 7 to 2, in the first game when Berger, who had been on the bench, was sent in as a pinch hitter.

Herman promptly shifted over to short and Jurgens edged over between short and third. Their calculations were perfect—to an extent. Berger hit directly to Herman. But, accustomed through the years to the shorter throw from second to first, Herman's arm failed to carry the extra distance. While the rifle-armed Jurgens, who had scooted over to back up Herman on the play, stood a few inches behind his pal in a position where he could have made the entire play easily, Herman's throw bounded short of first base and Berger was safe. The error left the way open for a five-run rally with which the Giants tied the score.

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## Ruth, Luke, Too

Now and then Tris Speaker, when he managed the Indians, would move everybody into right, or right center, against Babe Ruth. Once in a while it worked; often it didn't.

To a lesser extent, in recent seasons, the whole American League swung around for Luke Appling of the Sox, who, although a right-handed hitter, invariably hits to right field.

One day the Yanks came to town. Lou Gehrig, at first, and Tony Lazzeri, at second, almost literally put their heads together to stop Appling. They were close enough to touch fingertips, yet the tickled Luke singled right between 'em.—*John P. Carmichael in the Chicago Daily News.*

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They won in the eleventh and the Cubs, visibly disheartened, lost the nightcap without much of a struggle, slipped out of first place two days later and never were in the lead again.

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## Two Bases on a Fly!

BILL NICHOLSON of the Cubs recalls Mike McCormick, Braves' outfielder, as the only man he ever saw score from second on a fly ball to the outfield. When Nick was with Chattanooga, Kiki Cuyler raced about 475 feet in to dead center to catch a ball over his shoulder. By the time he put on the brakes, turned and the ball had been relayed home, McCormick was across the plate.—*Howard Roberts in the Chicago Daily News.*

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# Catcher's Indispensability a Myth

BY H. G. SALSINGER

*Condensed from the Detroit News*

**N**EVER AGAIN will the announcers at American League ball parks say: "The batteries . . . For Cleveland—Feller and Hayes."

For Frank Whitman Hayes is now a member of the Chicago White Sox. They got him for the waiver price of \$7,500. Even before waivers were secured, however, officials of the Cleveland club said that Hayes would never again catch regularly for the Indians.

Hayes was the batterymate of Robert William Andrew Feller, the so-called meal ticket of the Cleveland club. He was, by some people, credited with a portion of Feller's pitching success. Obviously, the Cleveland club was not in agreement with this assumption.

If Hayes had been responsible even in a small part for Feller's success he would still be with Cleveland.

The new owners, as well as the old, would never make a move that might possibly interfere with the effectiveness of their number one drawing card. The fact that Hayes went to the White Sox for the waiver price is proof in itself that Feller considered him less than indispensable. A nod from Feller would have kept Hayes on the Cleveland payroll.

There has been a great deal of journalistic parsley handed out about the value of certain catchers to certain

pitchers, and the intimation that this pitcher or that pitcher could get nowhere without the help of so and so. He would, in brief, be a flop with any other catcher paired with him.

The surmise dates back many years. Christy Mathewson was presumably lost unless Roger Bresnahan did the catching. Bresnahan was a great catcher but Mathewson was a greater pitcher, quite capable of doing his own thinking. The same was true of Grover Cleveland Alexander, Rube Waddell, Eddie Plank, Herb Pennock, Cy Young, Mordecai Brown, Bill Donovan, Carl Hubbell and the other "kings of the mound."

A good catcher is an invaluable aid in the early stages of a pitcher's career, when he needs someone to do his thinking and guide him. After the pitcher develops he does his own thinking and about all that he requires is a good mechanical receiver.

When Walter Johnson was in his prime he had Charles (Gabby) Street for a battery mate. Street created the illusion that he was responsible to a considerable extent for Johnson's success. He claimed to be the only catcher in baseball who could handle him.

Street used a few devices to impress people. He brought raw steaks to the ball park and would shove a piece of steak into his mitt before warming up Johnson, explaining to reporters that

he had to do this to lessen the shock. He also had a trick of producing a sharp, explosive report when the ball landed in his mitt, making the warmup sound like gunfire.

People in time became so impressed with Street's importance that they predicted Johnson's collapse if Gabby ever left Washington.

When Street was released by Washington, the town feared the worst. What would become of Johnson? Where was there another catcher who could handle his blinding speed? The answer was not long in coming.

Eddie Ainsmith succeeded Street and Johnson went right on winning ball games and, if anything, being more effective than ever. This puzzled many people and a reporter finally asked Ainsmith whether Johnson wasn't difficult to catch. How did he manage to handle his speed? How did he hold him?

"Hold him?" repeated Ainsmith and offered a frank and honest answer: "Why anybody with a mitt could catch Johnson while sitting in a rocking chair behind home plate."

So exploded another myth.

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## A Sleeper?

ARMAND CARDONI, the young Boston pitcher, has become a member of the Brooklyn family. The Braves have sent him to the Dodgers' Montreal farmhands. Branch Rickey wanted him all along in the Billy Herman deal, but he didn't want to appear too anxious.

So he took Stew Hofferth, who refused to report to Mobile, Brooklyn's Southern League plantation, and asked that Cardoni be thrown in to send to the Royals. The Braves readily agreed. Cardoni was really the joker in the deal and so Rickey didn't give Herman away, after all. He was so high on the pitcher at one time that he was prepared to give up \$25,000 for him, hard, cold cash on the line.

The story was hidden away in the bulletin out of Commissioner Chandler's office—Player Transfers—by Boston to Montreal—Armand J. Cardoni, outright.

He's a big, six-foot-two right-hander who weighs 175 pounds, twenty-four years old. He was with Milwaukee last year where his record wasn't too impressive, winning seven and losing ten decisions for the Brewers in twenty-two mound appearances, with an earned-run average of 4.20. Earlier in the year he was the property of Indianapolis where he didn't do any pitching.—*Harold C. Burr in the Brooklyn Eagle.*

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## Once Over Lightly

INFIELDER BEN REESE of Thomasville in the Georgia-Florida League claims he won't shave until he's batting .400. Latest average shows him about forty points short. Now the fans want a ground rule allowing only two bases on a ball lost in Ben's chin spinach!—*Sid Feder, Associated Press.*

# Bill McKechnie Sounds a Warning—

## Don't Give Up on War-Faded Stars

BY JIM McCULLEY

*Condensed from the New York Daily News*

**B**ILL McKECHNIE is one of the spiciest sages in sports, a fine director of men and, therefore, a fine baseball manager. The Deacon, as you must know, pilots the Reds in the NL. All the experts, including those who follow his Cincinnati club with a microscope, picked the Reds to finish last this season. McKechnie has made the experts look bad many times in the past and he's doing it again. As this is being written, Cincinnati is fighting for a first-division berth and could finish as high as third; even higher than that if some unforeseen disaster hits the Cards or the Dodgers.

Hank Gowdy, the old catcher and one of McKechnie's coaches, shakes his head and says, "I've been around baseball for so many years and I still don't know how he does it. He's a miracle man!"

And so the Deacon must be. He manages by far the weakest hitting team in baseball, fronted by a shaky pitching staff which combines extremes — thirty-five-year-old veterans and raw rookies. As far as juggling his outfield and infield around this season, Bill could take his act on any vaudeville circuit (are there any left?) and become a wow of an opening number.

Down through the years, McKechnie's name has become a legend linked with the law of percentages. "Bill always plays the percentages," they say.

In one way, basically, that's the truth. Yet, in another way, nothing could be further from the truth. Leo Durocher has earned a reputation for being a gambler on the baseball field. The Deacon is just as much a gambler as the Lip. The only difference is that McKechnie never gambles on a hunch. Sometimes, McKechnie is gambling when he appears to be playing percentages, and vice versa.

It's hard to tell the difference, even with deep study, because Bill must have a sound reason behind every string he pulls. And not all of McKechnie's reasons for doing a certain thing at a particular time are apparent. For instance, he may pull something against a player or a team in '46 backed up by a reason whose roots date back a half dozen years; or maybe only twenty-four hours.

All this has been said to build up the Deacon as a concrete thinker for what comes from here on in. We were all sitting around the other day, McKechnie, Coach Jimmie Wilson, and Gowdy, discussing baseball. And how

some teams could beat the Cards and couldn't beat the Phils or Pirates, etc. And what had happened to some of the star ball players who had spent a year or more in the service.

McKechnie spoke right up. "There will be more baseball bargains around after this season than at any time in the history of the game. Some stars have come back from the war and have failed. Clubs will give up on them, and some of them will live to regret it.

"Take my own Johnny Vander Meer. He came back from service this season and he couldn't win. He couldn't do anything right. He kept getting knocked out. But we kept putting him back in there. And finally, toward the end of June, he started winning. And he is still winning. In fact, he is a better pitcher right now than he ever was before. Yes, even counting those two no-hit games he pitched before the war. All he needed was a chance to get loose again. Get 'un-jointed' as we call it here."

The Deacon took a breath, and wound up again:

"You know what?" he said, "The thing that hurt ball players in the service most was the calisthenics. I don't mean it made them less fit or less healthy, but, from a baseball standpoint it hurt. The calisthenics practiced to harden men for the rigors of war put a terrific tension on arm, leg and back muscles; made them strong as hell, but far from supple.

"Muscles used in playing baseball must be supple as well as strong," continued the Deacon. "And they must

## DEACON TO RETIRE?

Deacon Bill McKechnie has intimated this may be his last year in baseball. Discussing Lonnie Frey's ability as an outfielder he said "You can jot this down in your book: regardless of who manages the Reds next year, Frey is a cinch to be one of the club's regular outfielders. He can't miss." When asked if he intends to retire, McKechnie merely smiled and walked away. —Lou Smith in the Cincinnati Enquirer.

be able to react gracefully as well as quickly to a man's thinking. These fellows who came back from service know what to do and are just as capable, in most cases, of doing it just as well as they once did it. Only they can't unbend. That's our job now. To get them un-jointed, as it were."

"That's exactly right," cut in Wilson, who used to manage the Cubs. "We give our boys plenty of calisthenics, too, during the Spring and even during the regular season. But they are exercises contrived to loosen up a man's muscular frame instead of tighten it up for a blow. Brute strength and stamina are needed to fight in combat, but they don't always make a star baseball player, or a virtuoso of the dance."

So, boys, don't give up on your pre-war diamond hero if he has booted a few this year. Sooner or later, if he's not too old, he'll be loose again and playing up to standard.

# Earning a Fishing Trip

BY SAM MOLEN

*Condensed from a broadcast over KMBC, Kansas City*

**T**HE STANDS at old Association park in Kansas City were packed to capacity one sweltering August afternoon in 1900 to see the great Rube Waddell in action on the mound.

But the Rube didn't pitch that day. Most of the spectators already were a little hot under the collar, but what really brought their blood to a boiling point was the discovery that Rube, instead of making the trip to Kansas City, had gone on a three-day fishing trip.

Here's why: Connie Mack, who then was managing the Milwaukee club, had brought Waddell up to the brand new American League. Connie took Rube after the Pittsburgh Pirates had given up on the eccentric pitcher. And under Mack's handling Waddell behaved—well, some of the time. But he still liked his fun and, best of all, he liked his fishing.

Rube went well at Milwaukee. He might have been a screwball off the mound, but he knew what to do when he had a baseball in his hand. He had color, he could pitch like a demon, and he had poise and confidence.

Milwaukee was in a hot pennant fight with Charles Comiskey's Chicago White Stockings that season. With Rube on the staff, Mack's club started going places. The fans who turned out to cheer Waddell watched the club

climb to within three games of Chicago.

Then Mack took his club to Chicago for a double-header. It was early August and Milwaukee trailed by just three games. The Mackmen were to play that twin bill in Chicago and then move on to Kansas City.

Mack sent Rube out to pitch the first game, and the eccentric pitcher showed that he had heart and stamina along with his tremendous power and skill on the mound. The game went past the regulation nine innings. It was tied up at two-all. The Chicago fans sat tensely, waiting for the break—through the thirteenth—the fourteenth—the fifteenth. But there was no break. It still was tied 2 to 2.

Finally, in the top of the seventeenth, a three-bagger chased home a run to put Milwaukee in front. Waddell walked out for the last half of the seventeenth and set the White Stockings down in order. He should have been exhausted, but when the last Chicago man was out, Rube threw his glove into the air and turned cartwheels all the way from the mound to the bench.

It was getting late—that game had taken more than three hours—and the Chicago captain came to Mack and asked him to shorten the second game to five innings. That still would make twenty-two innings, four more than the two regulation nine-inning games.



# Talcum Powder Babies

BY TOMMY FITZGERALD

*Condensed from the Louisville Courier-Journal*

**D**AVEY DANFORTH, who once fanned eighteen Kansas City Blues and whiffed fifteen or more batters a number of times during his career at Louisville before starring with the Browns, never has divulged the secret of his success . . . that is, what he did to make that ball "take off" just as it approached the batter.

But the ruddy cheeked, gray-haired, animated Bert Daniels, who played right field for the Louisville Colonels behind Danforth back in 1915, 1916 and 1917, reminisces with fondness about the old days. Daniels asserts he has the testimony of his own eyes that Danforth made babies out of the opposing batters with talcum powder.

"I used to see him sprinkle the stuff on his left trouser leg in the clubhouse," Daniels says. "Then on the mound, he'd rub the ball over that leg. The powder would give a shine to the ball and this enabled Danforth to make it take off, that is shoot up, as the batter was ready to swing at it."

A reflective gleam in his keen blue eyes, Daniels, vigorous beyond his sixty-one years, explained that the batter would either swing completely under the ball or succeed in getting only a piece of it. "All you could smell was wood burning from the friction of the bat with the ball," he said.

Mack agreed. Then he hunted up his great left-hander. Connie asked Waddell if he would like to fish for three days instead of going to Kansas City.

The Rube grinned. That made him happier than a lady with a dozen pairs of nylons. Mack quickly told him that all he had to do was pitch the second game. Rube grabbed the ball and shouted: "What are we waiting for—let's get started!" Waddell already had pitched seventeen innings of airtight baseball, but he was willing to pitch that many more, and then some, if it meant a fishing trip.

It seems almost incredible, but Rube Waddell went out and pitched those five innings of that abbreviated game and shut out the White Stockings. The victory brought Milwaukee within one game of Chicago. But that wasn't the important thing to Rube. What really mattered was that he had earned a fishing trip.

And that's how it happened that Rube Waddell was missing from the Milwaukee lineup when Connie Mack brought his team to Kansas City in August, 1900. But it's something the fans never knew for years.

# *It's a Bad Year for Harums*

BY MILTON RICHMAN

*United Press*

**M**ANY OF baseball's "David Harums," those diamond magnates who are happiest when outlicking the other fellow in a trade, regretfully realize now they outsmarted themselves several times this season.

Few of the trades consummated since the end of the 1945 campaign have worked out advantageously for both parties, and in many cases the transactions left both clubs worse off than when they opened negotiations.

President Horace Stoneham of the New York Giants wanted another outfielder for his club so he gave up Catcher Clyde Kluttz to the Phillies for Outfielder Vince DiMaggio. The eldest of the three ball-playing DiMaggio's was a complete bust in a Giant uniform, failing to get even one base hit and subsequently being sent to the minor leagues.

Meanwhile the Phillies turned around and traded Kluttz to the Cardinals for Second Baseman Emil Verban, and it develops that Philadelphia profited most by the three-way transaction. The Giants still haven't got the flychaser they wanted, they helped strengthen two clubs and they are shy one catcher.

Over in the American League considerable long-range strategy backfired, also.

During the winter General Manager

Bill DeWitt of the Browns and Owner-Manager Connie Mack of the Athletics thought it would be a great idea to trade First Basemen George McQuinn and Dick Siebert. So McQuinn was sent to Philadelphia and Siebert to St. Louis. Siebert never reported when the Browns failed to meet his salary request and the quiet McQuinn has disappointed Mack keenly. That transaction wound up a Mexican standoff and the Pasquel brothers had nothing to do with it.

Another deal that might have been better never made was the one in which the same Browns sent Outfielder Milt Byrnes to the Yankees for Catcher Ken Sears, a burly athlete with a big reputation and an even bigger waistline.

When Sears reported to the Browns he was some fifteen pounds overweight and his throwing arm appeared sadly neglected. The Browns realized they were duped and they attempted to cancel the deal, but they didn't even get as far as first base. Byrnes, who served the Browns well while he was with them, was quickly relegated to Kansas City by the over-laden Yankees.

Detroit also has felt the fury of the temperamental trade winds. The Tigers dispatched slugging Rudy York to the Boston Red Sox for pint-sized Eddie Lake. York continues to hit close to .300 for the Red Sox and drive

in many important runs, while Shortstop Lake barely is hitting .200 and has bogged down in the field.

Despite the lack of success various managements have encountered in the trading mart this season, most of them

still are eager to do business as usual. All of which is slightly reminiscent of the mule who repeatedly butted his head against a nearby tree.

"That mule ain't blind," explained its owner, "he just don't give a darn."

## Own Position Haunts Pilots

**T**HERE is a popular, generally accepted theory among the wise men in baseball that a manager runs smack into trouble every time he attempts to teach a youngster how to play the position he played himself when he was young.

The trouble stems from the manager's own peculiar style and habits at the position. As an illustration there was the disappointing start of Pee Wee Reese in Brooklyn under Manager Leo Durocher.

One thing Durocher could do better than any other shortstop in his time was to get the ball away without waste motion. Durocher's glove seemed to be lined with an inner spring. As soon as the ball made contact—presto! it was whistling toward first base.

No sooner did Reese arrive than Durocher was filling his ears with Leo's own tricks. All he succeeded in doing was to make a scatter arm out of Reese. Durocher was advised to let Reese work out his own problems the second year, and Pee Wee quickly hit his normal stride.

When Billy Terry was managing the Giants, as another example, he couldn't

develop an adequate successor to himself at first base—and again the wise men winked. They are now watching Mel Ott and his right field problem.

But not all managers are similarly afflicted, which proves that as a theory this one is not fool proof. A case in point is the success of Phil Cavarretta under the stewardship of Charlie Grimm, who as any wise man will admit was a pretty handy guy around first base.

Midway through Grimm's first term as manager of the Cubs—1933-'37—he installed seventeen-year-old Cavarretta as the regular first sacker and Phil played a sharp-hitting, hustling brand of ball to help the Cubs win the flag.

Cavarretta continued to learn the finer points around first base until Grimm was let out in 1938 in favor of Gabby Hartnett. That was the beginning of Cavarretta's temporary eclipse.

Not until Grimm was restored to the Cub leadership early in 1944 did Cavarretta come to life. He jumped thirty points to .321, and finished the '45 season as the league batting leader at .355 and as its most valuable player. —*The Old Scout in the New York Sun.*

# Feller's a Whiz Promoting, Too

BY ED MCAULEY

*Condensed from the Cleveland News*

**I**N THE excitement of other things, a noteworthy development of mid-season has been given no more space than was required to set down the essential facts.

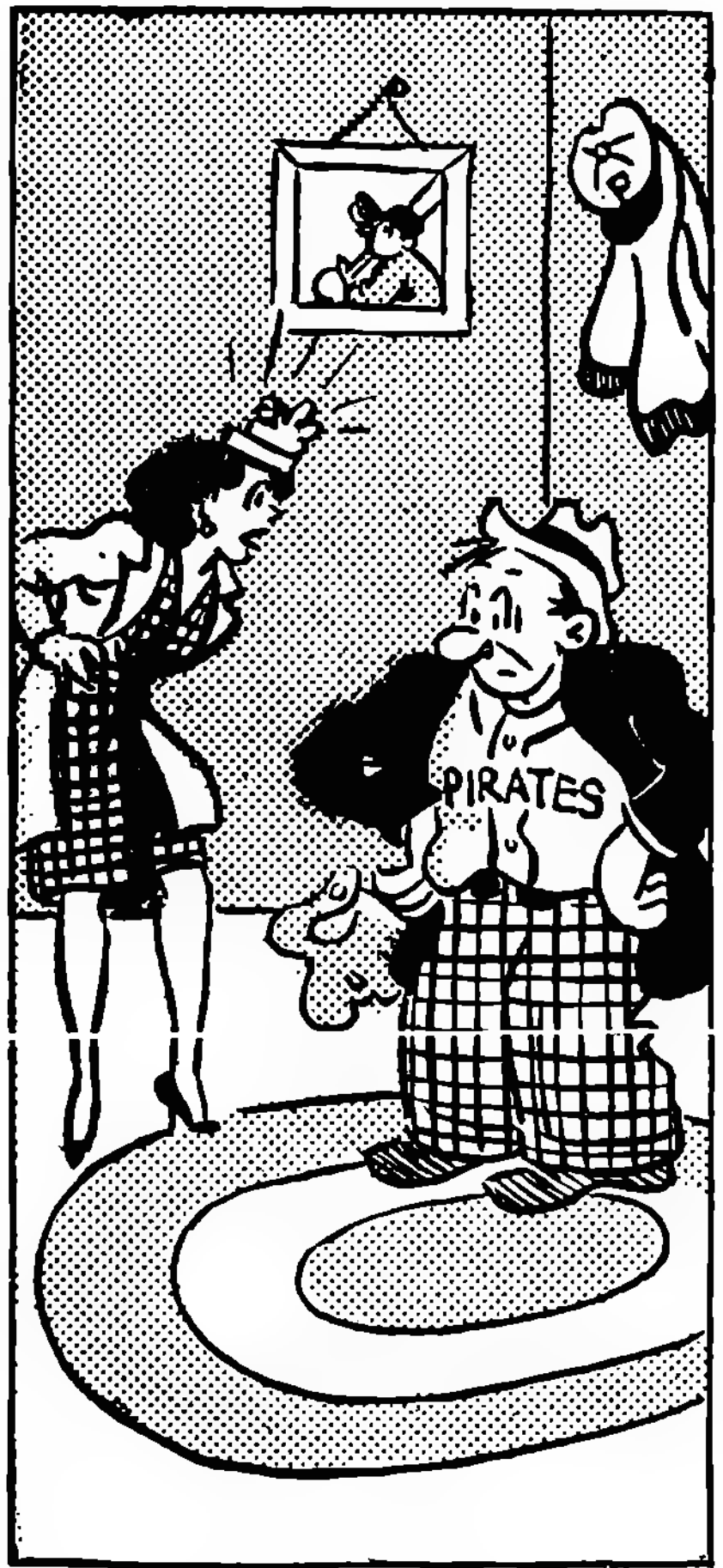
I refer to Bob Feller's recent announcement that he will lead a squad of interleague big shots through the country in October in one of the most elaborate barnstorming ventures ever undertaken.

Seventeen cities, including eight of the eleven big league towns, are on his itinerary, and no fewer than ten members of the All-Star rosters will be presented against the best available colored competition.

This is an undertaking which, for several weeks, at least, would occupy the full time of a professional promoter. Yet Feller himself made all the arrangements, from obtaining Commissioner Chandler's permission to lining up the players and mapping the transcontinental route.

He did this, mind you, while he was doing more pitching than anyone else in the business and while he was carrying out with scrupulous regularity a personal conditioning program which keeps him occupied more hours per day than any of his contemporary hurlers.

Rapid Robert wants to make some



"I know it's hard to buy shirts—but if you think I'm going out with you in that thing, you're crazy."

money in a hurry—and he is willing to work for it.

Feller reportedly collected \$20,000 last fall for a month-long tour in which he and Satchel Paige, the great colored pitcher, were the only headliners, and

therefore the only ones whose earnings ran into five figures.

"That's the only way to barnstorm," Feller said last winter. "All-star teams may draw bigger crowds, but there are too many fellows to split the gate."

I asked Bob the other day how his 1946 plans squared with this policy and he admitted he had changed his mind.

"We have an expensive promotion," he conceded, "but if we get a break in the weather, we ought to do all right."

Feller is looking forward to big crowds, and he means really big. In Cleveland, for example, he could have

booked an exhibition as a Sunday attraction at League Park. But the old play spot doesn't hold enough spectators. Bob hired the Stadium for a night game.

The prospective tour, of course, is as commercial as a tooth paste ad; but in the same spirit which moved him quietly to found a scholarship at an Iowa college and to write to the families of the Spokane bus crash offering assistance, the strikeout champion tied it up with a winning, human gesture. With most of the catchers in the major leagues clamoring for a chance to make the trip, Bob invited his old Cleveland batterymate, Rollie Hemsley.

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## Thinking Big League

CLARENCE ROWLAND has practically pulled a gun on the directors of the Pacific Coast League in his zeal to raise the status of the loop from Class AAA to major. At a recent meeting the league prexy, after uttering a long impassioned plea for concerted action by every club, whipped out a high sounding resolution. He insisted that every director ink the pledge in the presence of every other director.

Henceforth, every owner is to talk major league in all of his waking hours. San Diego and Portland are to build new ball orchards. Sacramento is to continue enlarging the Edmonds Field layout. Hollywood is to erect additional stands and bleachers.

It's the old "where there's a will there's a way" gag. Undoubtedly there's a bit of the Coue in it, too, and the boys probably will add to their prayer hours the saying "Day by day, in every way, we're getting nearer and nearer to being big league."—*Harry Borba in the San Francisco Examiner.*

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CHARLIE GRIMM, the affable, capable and witty manager of the Cubs, was asked why it was taking so long for the injured veteran, Stan Hack, to return to the lineup. Cholly didn't bother to go into a long dissertation on the medical phases of the injury. "Well," he drawled, "you know how hard it is to get spare parts these days."

# Remember the Coveleskies?

BY HARRY GRAYSON

*NEA Service*

**S**TANLEY came in as Harry bowed out, so big league baseball had a pitching Coveleskie for twenty years.

Southpaw Harry gained early fame as the Giant Killer, but the right-handed Stanley took them all. Stanley had more stuff than Harry, although the latter was good enough to win twenty-three games while losing only ten for Detroit to lead the American League in 1916.

Stanley had a mania for fishing, especially during the spring training period. Once when the Cleveland Indians trained at Lakeland, Fla., Covey and his roommate did not once bathe out of the clubhouse at the park. Covey kept the hotel room bathtub full of live minnows for bait. He always rose at six and went to the happy fishing grounds. Some of the minnows grew to be as large as trout by the time they broke camp.

In 1921 the Cleveland club trained in Dallas. One day Tris Speaker took the squad to his home town, Hubbard, down the road a piece, for a barbecue. Coveleskie was the star pitcher. Joey Sewell had come up the year before to take Ray Chapman's place at short-stop. Coveleskie got a rowboat and asked Sewell to take a ride. A quarter of a mile from shore. Covey asked Sewell if he could swim. Sewell said

no.

"Well, you're going to learn now," said Coveleskie. And with that he heaved Sewell overboard, and rowed back to shore. Sewell struggled in the water and nearly drowned. A rescue party saved him. Covey had no explanation. It simply was his idea of good, clean fun.

The Coveleskies were out of the coal mining country around Shamokin, Pa. Harry worked in the mines, began playing with the other miners' boys and attracted the attention of the Phillies, who took him south in 1908. Sent to Lancaster of the Tri-State League, he accumulated an unprecedented number of strikeouts. He was recalled in time to beat the New York Giants three times in a five-game series late in September.

Thus it was Harry Coveleskie who was accountable for the Giants' loss of the famous three-way race in 1908, not Fred Merkle, who has borne the onus ever since because he forgot to touch second base.

The Giants drummed Coveleskie out of the National League in 1909—first as a Phillie and then as a Red.

From some unknown quarter arose a story that the girl to whom Harry was engaged eloped with the drum major of a Shamokin band. Whenever Harry faced the Giants they organized an impromptu drum corps. The noise got on Harry's nerves and



rattled him to such an extent that his major league career was temporarily ruined.

Branch Rickey tried to land Coveleskie for the Browns in 1913, when he bagged twenty-nine and lost nine for Chattanooga, but Detroit agents beat him to it.

Coveleskie was one of the leading American League pitchers in '14, made a grand comeback. In 1916, when he showed the way with twenty-three and ten he had an E.R.A. of 1.97.

Stanley Coveleskie had a trial with the Athletics in '12, but was a polished workman, when he came to Cleveland from the Portland Coasters in '16. The fellow had everything, including the spitball, the throwing of which probably shortened his career.

Covey permitted only 1.82 runs per nine innings in '17 and only 1.83 the following campaign. He won twenty or more games five times, four in succession—in '18-19-20-21-25. He topped the list in effectiveness in '23 with 2.76.

Tris Speaker believed Covey was through when he traded him to Wash-

ington in the winter of '24, but the Pole's reply was to lead American League pitchers with twenty and five and in effectiveness with 2.84 to help the Senators to their second consecutive pennant.

Only Christy Mathewson's three shutouts for the Giants against the Athletics in '05 excelled Coveleskie's World Series performance for Cleveland against Brooklyn in '20. In winning three, he in no game permitted more than five hits or one run.

Covey lost two games in the World Series of '25, 3-2 and 6-3, as the Pittsburghs outlucked Washington.

Stanley won 211 and lost 140 games in the American League.

I saw Stanley pitch in an old-timers' game in Cleveland in '40. He didn't look much different than he did twenty years before, save that his teeth were a bit more worn down from chewing tobacco.

'They said Harry Coveleskie didn't have too much, but managed to get away with his games.

Stanley Coveleskie was a one-man pitching staff.

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## Discretion

MY FAVORITE umpire story is the one about the colored classic in Memphis where the pitcher hit the batter on the front of the skull with his high, hard one. The ball promptly described a high parabola down the right field foul line and was caught by the first baseman as a pop fly. The batter thereupon threw his bat at the pitcher, and they started a fist fight in front of home plate. The first baseman threw the ball at the umpire because he refused to rule that the batter had flied out. And the umpire, having kicked the first baseman and separated the belligerents, ruled it all "no-play" because the batter had batted out of turn!—*Bill Cunningham in the Boston Herald.*

# Phooey on "Nice Guys," Says Leo

BY FRANK GRAHAM

*Condensed from the New York Journal-American*

**I**T WAS TWILIGHT at the Polo Grounds and, in the Dodgers' dugout, Red Barber, the announcer, was needling Leo Durocher about the home runs the Giants had hit the day before.

"Home runs!" Leo said. "Some home runs! Line drives and pop flies that would have been caught on a bigger field! That's what they were!"

"Why don't you admit they were real home runs?" Red asked, sticking the needle in a little deeper. "Why don't you be a nice guy for a change?"

Leo had been reclining on the bench, watching the Dodgers at batting practice. Now he leaped to his feet.

"A nice guy!" he yelled. "A nice guy! I been around in baseball for a long time and I've known a lot of nice guys. But I never saw a nice guy who was any good when you needed him. Go up to one of those nice guys some time when you need a hundred to get you out of a jam and he'll always give you that:

"'Sorry, pal. I'd like to help you, but things are not going so good at the ranch.'"

He screwed up his face and clamped a hand across his hip pocket.

"That's what they'll give you, those nice guys. I'll take the guys who ain't nice. The guys who would put you in a cement mixer if they felt like it.

But you get in a jam and you don't have to go to them. They'll come looking for you and say:

"'How much do you need?'

"They don't ask you what you want it for. Just: 'How much do you need?'

"I got it now. I don't need it from anybody. But I know the time when I didn't have it—and I never got it from a nice guy."

A reporter winked at the others in the dugout.

"You a nice guy?" he asked.

"No," Leo said. "Nobody ever called me that."

"All right," the reporter said. "I'm going to the races tomorrow and when I see you in Boston, I'll probably need about \$800. How about it?"

"You'll get it," Leo said.

"The funny part of it is," the reporter said, "I know that if I went to you I would get it."

"Darned right you would," Leo said.

He walked up and down the dugout for a moment, then whirled suddenly and pointed toward the Giants' dugout.

"Nice guys!" he said. "Look over there. Do you know a nicer guy than Mel Ott? Or any of the other Giants? Why, they're the nicest guys in the world! And where are they? Buried in the second division!"

He walked up and down again,

beating himself on the chest. Suddenly he stopped, turned and said:

"Nice guys! I'm not a nice guy—and I'm in first place. Nobody helped me to get there, either, except the guys on this ball club and they ain't nice guys. There wasn't anybody in this league helped me to get up there. They saw me coming up and they—"

He stamped heavily on the floor of the dugout.

"That's what they gave me!" he yelled. "Nobody said to me: 'You're in third place now, Leo. We want to see you get up to second.'"

He picked up a towel from the bench and held it up high and patted it and said:

"Nobody said: 'You're in second place now, Leo. We'd like to see you in first place.'"

He threw the towel back on the bench.

"No, sir! Nobody wanted to see me up there. All the nice guys in the league wanted to knock me down, which is the way it should be. But in spite of them I got up there. I'm in first place now and ——"

He waved a hand toward the Giants' dugout.

"The nice guys over there are in

last place. Well, let them come and get me!"

The Dodgers were winding up their batting practice and Eddie Stanky was at the plate.

"Look at that little ——!" Leo said. "Think he's a nice guy? The hell he is! He'll knock you down to make a play, if he has to. He'll knock you down and pick you up and dust you off and say: 'I'm sorry.'"

"That's the kind of guys I want on my club."

He spoke warmly now.

"Look at him," he said. "The little ——. He can't run, he can't hit, he can't throw, he can't do nothing. But what a ball player! I wouldn't give him for any second baseman in the league. Or for any two second basemen."

The bell rang and the Dodgers were streaming into the dugout. A reporter who had been sitting on the bench got up.

"All up, boys," he said. "Make room for some nice guys."

"Not in this dugout," Leo said.

He waved toward the Giants' dugout again.

"The nice guys are all over there," he said. "In the second division!"

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MILT SHOFFNER, the ex-Braves' and Reds' elbow, is umpiring in the Eastern League now, and doing it like a guy who had plenty of experience watching when old Bill Klem was calling them. For instance, the other day Bill Luzansky, the Albany batter, started for first after the fourth pitch, figuring he had walked. Shoffner called him back and told him the count was three and one. And Manager Rip Collins came charging out of the dugout with a beef.

"Which of the four pitches," he howled, "did you call a strike?"

"The one," Shoffner calmly replied, "that was over the plate."

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ONE of the batting oddities of this season was produced by Bobby Doerr when, in a game in May with Cleveland, the Red Sox' star second baseman made two triples, a double and a single in five trips to the plate—and yet didn't drive in a single run!

# Military Escort for an Ump!

BY GEORGE A. BARTON

*Condensed from the Minneapolis Tribune*

**C**HARLEY MOORE, competent and colorful American Association umpire, probably is the only official to march off a baseball field under military escort. But, it was not an honor. It was for protection.

It happened in 1924, Moore's first year of umpiring in organized baseball, in a game in the Blue Ridge League between clubs representing Frederick and Hagerstown, Md.

"Keen rivalry existed between the two cities," Moore recalled, "and, when they met in the final game of the season at Frederick, the park was packed.

"Frederick had a catcher named Bill Bird who was a bad actor. He always was in trouble with umpires and made dire threats every time we chased him, which was often.

"I chased him oftener than any of the other umpires, consequently he hated me like a burglar hates a cop. He openly threatened to have me killed if I worked the final game of the season at Frederick. It so happened I was assigned to the series by our league president, J. W. Jamison, now president of the Inter-State League.

"Bird, in one of the early innings, called me all manner of vile names on ball and strike decisions. I gave him the heave-ho.

"The mugg, after changing to

street clothes, went into the grandstand and incited a couple of hundred hill-billies to mob me. Their hatred became as strong as Bird's when Hagerstown won the game, 3-2, after I called out a Frederick runner at the plate for what would have been the tying run in the ninth inning. He made the third out.

"Then it broke loose. Bird and his mob charged onto the field with a couple of ropes and shouted they were going to lynch me and my partner, Bill Rudolph.

"Rudolph and I managed to outrun the mob to our dressing-room. A sheriff and several policemen tried to hold them off as the mob sought to break down the door.

"Fearing the mob would lynch us, the sheriff dashed to a national guard camp pitched within a block of the ball park and begged help of the commanding officer.

"The C. O. responded by mustering two full companies of militiamen who hurried on the double to our rescue.

"Rudolph and I were placed in the middle of the two companies and escorted first to our hotel and then to the railroad station where they saw us safely off.

"Pres. Jamison suspended Bird for three years from the Blue Ridge League and fined him \$500."

# Digesting *the* Questions

*(All questions pertaining to baseball will be answered in this department in the issue following receipt if they are of general interest and space permits. If a direct answer is desired, enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Address: "Question Editor," Baseball Digest, 188 West Randolph Street, Chicago 1, Ill.)*

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**Q.—Did any pitcher ever pitch a double-header shutout? A.—Yes, Ed Reulbach did for the Chicago Cubs against Brooklyn on Sept. 26, 1908. The scores were 5-0 and 3-0.**

**Q.—What is the largest number of runs ever batted in by one player during a World Series game? A.—While the record for one game during the regular season is twelve, the World Series record is only five. It's shared by a pair of Yankees, Tony Lazzeri and Bill Dickey, who both accomplished the feat in the same game, Oct. 2, 1936, against the Giants.**

**Q.—How many members of their 1941 champions are still on the Brooklyn Dodgers' roster? A.—Nine. They are Pete Reiser, Pee Wee Reese, Dixie Walker, Augie Galan, Kirbe Higbe, Hugh Casey, Harry Lavagetto, Ed Head and Joe Medwick.**

**Q.—What is a "slider?" A.—It's a pitch delivered much the same as a fast ball except that it usually is grasped slightly off center and "a little wrist is thrown into it" as it is released. It comes up to the batter about the same as if it has been thrown from short.**

**Q.—If a catcher holds the ball while a runner attempts to steal second, is the runner entitled to a stolen base? A.—If the catcher holds the throw because of the fear a man on third may score or because the runner on first base advanced so far that the throw apparently would be futile, the runner receives credit. However, if the opposing team is so far ahead that the stolen base can't conceivably affect the outcome of the game and no play is made, then no stolen base is credited.**

**Q.—Is the home team dugout always on the third base side in the big leagues? A.—No, it's strictly a matter of home team preference, with seven of the sixteen clubs preferring first base. In most cases this is because the first base dugout is more convenient to the clubhouse. Those choosing the**

*(Concluded on page 64)*

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*(Concluded from page 62)*

first base side at home are the New York, Washington, Boston and Cleveland clubs in the American League (the Indians in both their home parks) and New York, Pittsburgh and Brooklyn in the National League.

**Q.**—When did the "Junior World Series" get under way and what is the standing? **A.**—The Junior World Series between the American Association and the International League playoff champions began in 1920, after the American Association and Pacific Coast League teams had played a similar series in 1919. The American Association leads, fifteen series to ten. There was no series in 1935.

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## **Don't Forget Rudy York**

IT ISN'T ALL Ted Williams, and it isn't all Bobby Doerr and Johnny Pesky and Dom DiMaggio, nor yet the fine pitching of Tex Hughson, Boo Ferriss and Mickey Harris that makes the Red Sox.

"Rudy York has made a lot of difference," Joe Cronin said recently. He's made a lot more difference than most people give him credit for."

The acquisition of York in a trade that sent a spare infielder, Eddie Lake, to Detroit was strictly Cronin's idea.

"I had a hunch last year that the Tigers would put him on the block and move Hank Greenberg back to first base," he said. "So I went to the World Series primarily to study him. He didn't get many hits against the Cubs, you remember, but he got some big ones. I was sure he would help us. We needed one more tough right-handed hitter behind Williams because I figured they'd be walking Ted a lot and I wanted power there to drive him around the bases. York has given it to us. Makes a lot of difference."

York is playing a strange role in Boston—the role of hero. For many years in Detroit, even his best years, it was the customers' pleasure to boo him until his eardrums throbbed. There was no particular sense in it, but that's the way it was. In Boston the big first baseman never hears anything but cheers, and they have proved a shot in the arm for him. He, rather than Williams, may easily be the man who will lead the Red Sox in runs batted in.—*Gordon Cobbledick in the Cleveland Plain Dealer.*

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TO OUR MIND, the greatest hitting exhibition of all time was the afternoon in Pittsburgh's spacious Forbes Field when Babe Ruth, then with the Braves and barely able to stoop over, cleared the right field ROOF three times in one game. We have always felt that was the day the Babe should have turned in his uniform.—*Jimmy Powers in the New York Daily News.*



**Little Professor—** Dom DiMaggio may look pedagogish, but he certainly doesn't hit — or field — like an old school teacher. The youngest DiMag has been a vital factor in Red Sox' spectacular season. Read Ed Rumill's interesting yarn about him on page 39, this issue.





**HE'S RECEIVING**—Compliments for his handling of the Athletics' pitching this year, is Warren (Buddy) Rosar. Buffalo product is in eighth American League season. Philadelphia got him from Cleveland last year. Earlier he served four seasons with Yankees.

Another scan  
by  
cape1736

